A. T. ARIYARATNE
COLLECTED WORKS

VOLUME IV

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
PROFESSOR RALPH BUULTJENS

A Sarvodaya Vishva Lekha Publication

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Professor Ralph Buultjens

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PREFACE

It is indeed a great pleasure for me to edit the writings of Dr. A.T. Ariyaratne. This collection contains many speeches and talks given by him at International forums. I have selected herein eighteen of his recent contributions and arranged them chronologically.

As everyone knows Dr. A.T.Ariyaratne is a community leader known internationally and a grassroots level social worker. He has earned several international awards for his service to the rural poor in Sri Lanka. As leader of the Sarvodaya Movement, Dr.Ariyaratne has delivered many lectures and published numerous articles on Sarvodaya ideals and values in order to create an awareness in the minds of the people both here and abroad.

In editing this fourth Volume I received maximum co-operation from the staff of the Sarvodaya Research Unit. Its co-ordinator Mr. E.H.S. Fernando not only gave his valuable guidance but also personally supervised this publication. Professor Ralph Buultjens favoured us by writing an incisive introduction. Mr.Kamal Waleboda, Co-ordinating Secretary of Sarvodaya extended the encouragement necessary to finalise this volume.

Finally I must thank the Vishva Lekha Press for all the assistance rendered in connection with the printing and the publication of this Volume.

B.A. Tennyson Perera
Sarvodaya Research Unit,
Moratuwa.

INTRODUCTION

By Prof. Ralph Buultjens

In the past, great international struggles focused on strategic issues, war and peace between major powers. In our time, critical global questions also involve life and death for multi-millions. However, these modern struggles are no longer between the powerful and among the mighty. The most tragic conflicts of today pit the powerless, billions of people who live in Third World countries, against terrible forces of degradation and destruction-poverty, hunger, malnutrition, disease, unemployment, environmental decay.

In this struggle for survival, the principal weapon of deprived nations and people is development. Yet unfortunately for these poorer groups, development is not an instant process. The maturation, uplift and advancement of nations, economics, societies and cultures require time and sustained effort. It is a passage that exhausts human patience, taxes natural resources and needs substantial amounts of capital. It is a goal on which everyone is generally agreed, but to which too few are specifically committed.

Development as public policy and as national strategy is relatively recent in origin. It is only after the spasm of decolonization following World War II that serious consideration was given to development programmes and strategies in the Third World. The initial impulse came largely from governments in collaboration with multilateral international agencies. These early development activities were essentially the exclusive preserve of government functionaries – economic pundits, planning experts, technicians and bureaucrats. Although significant work was undertaken, the basic approach tended to reflect the perspective of these architects-plans were more important than people, people were perceived as things, things and aspirations were measured by their material content.

Gradually, however, non-governmental interest and involvement in development began to grow. Voluntary as-

sociations, citizens groups, religious organizations and allied activists sought to enliven and expand the development process. Today, their contribution is both vital and substantial. Development will probably grind to a halt if non-governmental support declines.

A pioneer in mobilizing non-governmental resources for development is A.T. Ariyaratne. An educator by profession and a humanitarian by confession, Ariyaratne came to four seminal conclusions early in his career. These realizations, then so original, have since become the fundamental constructs of non-governmental involvement in development, – the basic rationale that inspires all men and women of goodwill in their participation in the development process:

* Development is first and most importantly a people based activity, whose goals must be human if they are to be successful
* Intangibles, such as moral values and cultural ways, are as important (if not more so) than material in-puts and objectives
* Foreign aid and assistance will increasingly have a non-governmental component and can often be best applied through non-governmental groups in the Third World
* Self-help is an essential ingredient in development and must be expanded and encouraged, particularly in rural areas.

What was once innovative often becomes conventional. Over the years, the Ariyaratne concepts have infused the development process and changed its very character. Yet, three decades and more ago, these were startling insights. Many practitioners of development then found them radical and unrealistic. Time has proven how wrong they were and how much damage has been done by this conservative resistance. It must give Dr. Ariyaratne considerable satisfaction to know that his approach now informs the entire development field, that experience has validated his fundamentals, and that many of his early critics are now converts to these ideas.

Dr. Ariyaratne also pioneered another development truth: Development needs organization and structure of a non-governmental type. Without this framework, the most benign efforts become ineffective and valuable resources dissipate. Thus, the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement was born. Thirty years since its origin, Sarvodaya has an unrivalled network in rural Sri Lanka and has flowered into a variety of enterprising development activities. Its work and its workability is now a model of non-governmental development efforts - a model that is emulated in a large number of developing countries. Interestingly, the Ariyaratne strategy is also increasingly gaining acceptance as a method of reaching the underprivileged in richer, industrialized nations.

Recognition and success has earned Dr. Ariyaratne many awards, honours and prizes. These are well-merited tributes to his large and worthy contribution to the theory and practice of development. However, such distinctions are ephemeral. They are public genuflections of esteem that solve the vanities of lesser men. Larger minds like Dr. Ariyaratne are concerned with more enduring realities such as the continuity of ideas. This is why the publication of his *Collected Works* is of such importance.

Many leaders in public life are intellectually tight-fisted, stingy with their ideas. By denying access to their thoughts they seek to maintain the aura of superiority that reticence enhances. Dr. Ariyaratne is a rare exception. He is generous with his thoughts and gives freely of his mind. A prolific speaker and writer, he enjoys the pleasure of sharing. There are no secrets in his strategies, no mystery in his methodology. His publications are text-books on development, lessons that in their simplicity and clarity can be easily understood by all. This is the spirit that should enrich all development processes – candour, participation, practical education available to everyone.

This theme and tone is found in the first three volumes of Dr. Ariyaratne's *Collected Works*. Volumes I and II, published in 1978 and 1980 respectively, together present

twenty addresses, papers and analyses by Dr. Ariyaratne. They embrace a difficult decade of development – the 1970s. Volume III, published in 1985, contains eighteen speeches and writings, and focuses on the first one-half of the 1980s. The current volume is the fourth in this series. It has a selection of eighteen presentations given by Dr. Ariyaratne in the years 1985-89.

Looking at the *Collected Works* in their totality, three features emerge. First, there is a clear evolution in A.T. Ariyaratne's thinking. As the years pass, there is a more pronounced spiritual element in his worldview. Grounded in Buddhism, his philosophy has grown to universalize the spirituality of development. Ariyaratne has expanded his own spiritual horizons and his vision of development reflects this dimension. In this progression is an important message for those concerned with development. It is a holistic process in which the central dynamic may well be spiritual energy.

A second feature: Ariyaratne has become deeply sensitive to the use and misuse of science, and its handmaiden, technology. The temptations of short-term progress at heavy long-term cost trouble Dr. Ariyaratne. While his earlier attention was on advancement, he is now deeply concerned with its price. A third element in the *Collected Works* is also instructive. It shows that Dr. Ariyaratne is constantly learning, exploring new horizons, and adapting his ideas with a remarkable flexibility. The development world of the late 1980s is drastically different from the development world of the early 1970s. Ariyaratne's attitudes and analyses keep pace with the times. This is why they are so contemporarily relevant.

Through his written and spoken words Dr. Ariyaratne conveys another emotion – hope. These are difficult days for developing societies. The unkindness of nature combines with the hard-heartedness of man to produce a developing environment that is discouraging. Yet, Ariyaratne never falters in his optimism. It is an optimism rooted in reality, in evidence that humanity can prevail, rather than in millenial

faith. In an atmosphere of gloom and doom this is a refreshing affirmation. When a leader of Dr. Ariyaratne's experience and sagacity has such hopefulness the development endeavour is charged with light. In current conditions of despair, this may well be Ariyaratne's greatest immediate contribution – the raising of morale and the message that there is no alternative to success.

In his own way, Dr. Ariyaratne is the progenitor of a different kind of revolution. It is constructive. It is non-violent. It is based on fraternity. It is economic as well as spiritual. It is addressed to the untended rural poor. It is a classless revolution in that it eschews hate and seeks to change the condition of the deprived and the attitudes of the affluent. It is both modern and traditional. Above all, it maintains that human progress is possible even under extreme duress. This is, indeed, a notion of revolution different from those of both Karl Marx and Mahatma Gandhi – a revolution that draws on some of their intellectual capital, but seeks to create something fresh for our time.

Will this brave effort succeed? It is perhaps too ear'y to make an assessment. Fierce vested interests can be expected to oppose these ideas. Powerful and ambitious forces are not easily thwarted. Great rivers of corruption run through many Third World societies, carrying their beneficiaries to extraordinary levels of wealth. When threatened, such votaries of venality will not hesitate to kidnap truth and hijack decency. These are dangers that movements like Sarvodaya and its leaders face. They are dangers that are most likely to surface in the years to come. All we can say is that the heritages of our countries are too precious and the human stakes too high for the future to be entrusted to crooks and villains, to the thoughtless and the unfeeling.

Dr. Ariyaratne has survived many struggles and many battles. These trials have surely strengthened him and must give him encouragement as he looks to the future. He has fashioned instruments of change and weapons of hope. The record to date is one of much achievement. However, the

greatest challenges and greatest tests still lie ahead. Although he is seasoned in conflict, old in experience, Dr. A.T. Ariyaratne is still relatively young in years. All those who want a more equitable world, societies without deprivation and exploitation, will share Dr. Ariyaratne's vision for the future and wish him many more years of vigourous activity.

Dr. Ariyaratne's vision is detailed with determination, compassion and wisdom in this volume. His countless well wishers and admirers, and many others who want to learn about the great struggles of our time, will find much to think about in his words. To that end, this book deserves and will get the widest possible readership around the world.

Ralph Buultjens

Colombo
24th January 1989.

RALPH BUULTJENS, Toynbee Prize Laureate and author of many books on international politics and philosophy, is Senior Professor at New Yale University and the New School for Social Research. He is Senior Fellow of the Institute of Fundamental Studies in Sri Lanka and has received many awards for outstanding scholarship. Dr. Buultjens is also currently Chairman of the International Development Forum.

SOURCES OF THE SPEECHES AND ARTICLES PUBLISHED IN THIS VOLUME

1. **Science and Technology in the Service of Man**

   From a keynote speech delivered in Osaka, Japan at the International Symposium sponsored by the Mainichi Newspapers, Osaka Junior Chamber and Mainichi Broadcasting Systems on 1985 October 8th.

2. **Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka - Development from below**

   A paper prepared for presentation at the Symposium on "Economic Development under prolonged occupation: The West Bank & Gaza Strip," Organised by Welfare Association, Geneva on 1986 January 3rd to January 5th.

3. **Strategic Issues in Development Management - Lessons from Sarvodaya**

   From a speech delivered at the Round Table Conference on Strategic Issues on Development Management: Learning from Successful Development Projects, organised by the Commonwealth Secretariat held at the University of Warwick in England from June 29 to July 3, 1987

4. **Landlessness in Sri Lanka**

   From a speech delivered at the expert Consultation on Landlessness in Rural Asia held in Hanoi, Vietnam from 7th to 9th February 1987

5. **Peace Making in Sri Lanka in the Buddhist Context**

   Paper delivered at Hawaii on 1987.

6. **Spiritual Awakening and Human Progress Religious Co-operation - A Living Experience**

   From a speech to be delivered to the "International Seminar on the Future of Mankind and Co-operation

among Religions" organised by the Japan Foundation for the United Nations, University of Tokyo, Japan on 1987 April 15th.

7. **Five Lessons and a Goal**

   Reprint from My Work, My Teacher by 26 Ramon Magsaysay Awardees in Commemoration of the 30th Anniversary of the Ramon Magsaysay Award Manila, 1987

8. **Social Service and Humanity - What Buddhists can contribute**

   From the Keynote Address delivered at the 13th International Buddhist Conference, sponsored by International Buddhist Brotherhood Association, Tokyo, Japan, held at the Mahinda Social Welfare Centre, Ranmuthugala, Sri Lanka on 1987 December 9th.

9. **Communication for Rural Development in a Changing Society**

   From the Address delivered at the South Asian Seminar on "Communication for Rural Development in a Changing Society" Sponsored by NATE, SLTTI and ASPBAE, on 1987 December 28th.

10. **Sarvodaya and the Economy**

    Culled from the lecture delivered at the Sarvodaya Management Training Institute on 1987 November 7th.

11. **The Challenge of Continuity in Community Awakening - The Realization of Sarvodaya Objectives in the present context of Sri Lanka**

    Talk delivered at the Pre-consortium Meeting held at the NOVIB Headquarters in Den Haag, the Netherlands on 1988 February 4th.

12. **Total Social Transformation through People centered Development - Current Trends in Philanthropy in the Developing World**

    This is the Text of the Speech delivered at the World

Congress on the Philanthropy, Metro, Toronto Convention Centre, Toronto, Ontario, Canada 1988 May 23rd to 27th.

13. **Reaching the Unreached**

Theme Address at the Third International Symposium on Public Health in Asia and the Pacific Region, Jakarta, Indonesia. 1988 December 4 to 8.

14. **Professionalisation of Sarvodaya Services, Community Understanding and National Awakening**

The Presidential Address made at the 31st Annual General Meeting of the Sri Lanka Sarvodaya Shramadana Sangamaya held on 1987 September 26th.

15. **Sarvodaya and Resource Partners**

Speech delivered at the Second Sarvodaya International Resource Partners' Consortium Meeting on 1987 February 24th.

16. **Sarvodaya Concept of Development and its applicability to Building up an Asian Regional Network including Japan**

Excerpts from a Keynote Address to the International Symposium on Regional Development held at Kagoshima Prefecture, Japan, on 1988 December 27th.

17. **What to do, Now?**

Translation from a Sinhala letter to all Sarvodaya Workers at the Divisional and District Levels and through them for further information of Sarvodaya Workers in the country.
Reprinted in: *Learning how to live in Peace: The Sarvodaya Movement in Sri Lanka, by Detlet Kantowsky, Vishva Lekha, Ratmalana, 1988.*

18. **New Year (1989) Message to the Sarvodaya Family**

Sarvodaya Headquarters, Moratuwa, 1989.

1.

Science and Technology in the Service of Man – Building a Human Scale Society

I would like to start my presentation firstly by thanking the joint sponsors of this Symposium, namely, the Mainichi Newspapers, the Junior Chamber of Osaka and the Mainichi Broadcasting System, for inviting me to participate as a keynote speaker and panelist.

I was made to understand that you have sponsored similar Symposia during the last several years on different global issues, and this is the sixth in the series. In an age when communication media and social bodies are mostly preoccupied with gross materialism either in its free-enterprise commercialistic form or state-managed ideological forms, it is very refreshing that you have ventured on a futuristic search and an open reflection of this nature pertaining to science and human survival. It indicates that in harnessing science and technology for the service of man you are emphasising the service science and technology could render with the human being as the centre of interest. In a way you are jumping not one step but a number of steps of modern thinking geared only to explore what science and technology could contribute to increase the material comforts and legacy of the human being.

I must confess that when I saw the names of the galaxy of very eminent scholars, scientists, economists and political leaders including several Heads of States, who have come to these Symposia both in the past and the present moment, it made me wonder in which way I could make a useful contribution to your concerned efforts in seeking a path for a better future for humanity. May be, by enabling you to look into yourself, turn the searchlight into the inside of all of us, my humble contribution could be made more fruitful.

My background is the village. My learning is from the rural people in the villages of Sri Lanka in particular and other similar communities in Asia and Africa in general. I also have learnt a great deal from the situations of non-elite people in industrialised societies like those in Japan, North America and Europe. But I am not ashamed to state that the best part of my learning has come from the humble experiences that I have had from contact with the common

people, the villagers with whom I lived and among whom I worked for the greater part of my life.

The national or global issues that are discussed from a distance at the academic, policy formulation and decision making levels are facts of everyday life – hard realities – for these disadvantaged communities. Being a person living and working with them most of my time, I am used to look at these issues more from their perspective, or, as you may put it, from the 'other end of the telescope'.

Let us take the much talked of example of Ethiopia these days. Those human beings who die of starvation or of diseases made fatal by high degree malnutrition also have a fundamentally similar psycho-physical composition like yours and mine. They may be weak in their empirical scientific knowledge but they do not lack intuitive wisdom. Most often their intuitive capacities are more advanced than those of others who do not face such extreme challenges of human survival. They also analyse their own situation in their micro-level family and community life and even may go to the maximum extent of even desperately doing something at least for survival. At the same time, these very same problems have become concerns of governments, inter governmental organisations and other interested international bodies. They too make their own macro analyses and with all good intent offer their macro solutions. But do those who talk and take decisions about them at the global level, have any real experience about the problems these people are faced with? I may say the global analysts, the decision makers, safe and secure in their far-away comfortable positions, do talk and discuss, quite unaffectedly, of those people and their problems which have never become a reality, a hard fact of life to them.

When we consider these two parallel processes of problem analyses and solutions, one done at the level of the affected people and the other at the level of concerned outsiders far away, there seems to be a very serious communication gap which even aggravates the situation more. This is true of practically all spheres of human activity all over the world.

Decisions are taken by a few who are not directly affected by the problem while ironically the consequences are borne by the affected majority. To make matters worse these decision makers are not only unaffected by the problems but are also unconcerned with the consequences of the decisions taken by them.

What happens when the same problem is seen from two different stand-points – be it lack of basic human needs such as food and safe water, health and educational facilities, unemployment and underemployment, lack of income and mass poverty, environmental hazards and ecological disasters, social unrest and drug addiction, rascalism and terrorism, human rights violations and counter-violence, power political strifes and civil wars, ideological propagandism and building up of nuclear armaments? I am aware that it is very difficult to make people perceive a problem from two different stand-points. But if it can be done the entire understanding of the problem takes a normal perspective.

What is perceived becomes different depending on the angle from which one looks at the problem. On one hand is a so-called impersonal, distant, objective, and macro view of the problem while on the other hand is a personal, close, subjective, experientially conditioned, and micro view of the problem. This necessarily results in two approaches to the solution of the problem. One: capital intensive, high-technology, centrally controlled, top-down and possibly structurally violent approach. Two: labour intensive, people centred, sustainable technology, bottom-up and laterally spreading and generally a structurally non-violent approach. The most important aspect here, as far as I could see, is the evil of "affectation". Those at the macro level are also affected but not in the same way as those at the micro level. The latter are the realists who suffer from the problem, who are confronted with it, for whom solutions are suggested and who eventually have to suffer the effects of such solutions.

We are all aware that over two thousand people were killed and thousands were injured when something went

wrong in the multi-national Union Carbide Pesticides Manufacturing facility in Bhopal, India. The immediate cause would certainly have been technical or managerial in nature. But, wasn't there a much deeper and more serious perceptional reason that gives rise to this sort of tragedies in innumerable places as almost daily occurrences. The tragedy at Bhopal is only an example of one instance where this 'perception' of ours, I would say the perception of problems from a non-affected level from afar, resulted in a dramatised large scale catastrophe. All over the world such non-dramatised, long time drawnout tragedies are taking place. At least the tragedy at Bhopal should enable us to look into ourselves and become conscious of the nature of such unfortunate disasters which could be easily avoided.

Deeper down, in this issue, wouldn't you think that there were two processes working on the same problem but functioning divergently bringing about a situation where science and technology are incorrectly applied for whatever reasons? Science and technology applied solely for the benefit of a few ignoring the vast amount of people who should really be the centre of interest in the application of such science and technology.

Tillers of the soil have their own ideas about farming. They have their own traditional technologies for pest and weed control. This they have evolved out of successive centuries of experience, looking back into themselves or lighting up their inward selves. Perhaps they may not have been conscious of the precise nature of this process itself. But somehow, inwardly they felt their forefathers felt the incessant need to perceive life and its realities this way.

They have their own organisational structures that have stood the tests of time. One important factor in their system is the integration and totality of approach in all these areas of ideas, techniques and structures and their functioning in a total spirituo-moral and cultural setting. I am not saying that theirs were the most efficient and the best of farming and no new ideas or technologies should be introduced. What I am saying is the fact that there was a science and art of living in

their simple life and work. In every measure they adopted the final assessment was in what it contributed to increase the quality of life, to enhance the pattern of joy they derived from working, 'leisuring' and living. Joy of living, and not mere increase in productivity and accumulation of wealth was their principal objective. Therefore, whatever science and technology is introduced to their situation should have come in from their own perspectives to meet their own perceived needs.

We know that as far as the manufacturers of chemical inputs are concerned, their aim is not the enrichment of the quality of life of farming communities in the latter's own cultural milieu. They go all out for maximisation of profits with honest promises of increased income. They have no difficulty in coming into legal and mostly mutually beneficial agreements with other corporate bodies both of governments and the private sector. They use not only the physical sciences but also the social sciences to push their high technologies and macro-justifications for their use, down the throats of the decision-making hierarchies and so on down to the farming communities. The human person, the family unit and the community organisation seem to have lost their visibility in this exercise. They are overshadowed, manipulated, deceived and pushed around by the dominating processes released from top down. Science and Technology are used as mere tools and not as instruments designed to increase or enhance the quality of living and joy of life.

This is what is happening around the world whether the victims are in Sahelian Africa, slums of Calcutta, ghettos of New York, refugee camps in Cambodia, or polluted cities and manipulated rural areas anywhere in the world. Having had the opportunity of meeting and understanding the psychology of the decision-makers at the top, while living and working with the less-privileged, I couldn't help but come to three conclusions for my own guidance in our work.

Firstly, the cumulative result of the unjust and selfish ways in which science and technology were used to exploit

unsuspecting peoples and an enduring Nature is such that it is just now starting to make an adverse impact also on those who initiated such processes. Radiation that can come about from defective disposal of nuclear waste, nuclear mishaps or even suicidal use of nuclear warheads cannot discriminate between the wrongdoer and the intended victim. The lethal boundaries of a Bhopal Hazard or a Hiroshima catastrophe cannot be contained to include only the voiceless. The acid rains on the forests of Western United States and Europe are bound to extend into fresh pastures. The deadly viruses of terrible diseases such as AIDS, given birth to by human products of a purely commercial and irreligious culture, are no respecters of a person's social, economic or political status. The cumulative process unleashed by those who helped in the decision-making and decision-implementation emphasising the use of science and technology, ignoring the interest on human beings, is now reaping its malignant results.

Secondly, no amount of further scientific research and development of technologies under newly coined names will ever succeed in containing the danger zone. When I saw some of the illusions that have been created through computerised systems in some of the technological inventions at the Tsukuba Exhibition in Japan, I began wondering about the direction in which some of the innovative research is being directed. Haven't we got enough illusions around us already? Of what use is it to direct technology in such directions? I agree that research has to go on uninterruptedly, but this should be only in directions that will be useful to humanity specially to overcome the illusions already created. A former Minister in a neighbouring country, whom I met immediately after their war of liberation comes to my mind at this stage. He told me, "Can you imagine me staying three nights with my wife and children in a refugee camp?" Of course, when I heard this question, my imagination went to the millions of his countrymen who died in that struggle. We have to remind ourselves that all of us are in a global refugee camp and no other super-being from another planet is coming to save us

unless we think and decide to save ourselves. The time has come for us not to look for solutions entirely in science and technology, but to look within ourselves for an intelligent way out of this precarious situation that some of us have created for all of us.

Thirdly, we have to converge our divergent processes of looking at problems from top-down and bottom-up perspectives and cultivate a technique of perceiving problems from a total and global perspective with our central interest focussed on human beings. We have to remind ourselves of the words of the greatest scientist of our era, Albert Einstein, who once said, "Perfection of means and confusion of goals seem to characterize our age. If we desire sincerely and passionately the safety, the welfare and free development of talents of all men, we shall not be in want of the means to approach such a state."

It is my contention that forces of organised greed and illwill have made science and technology to drift further and further away from more worthwhile goals of human life developed by successive civilizations over the millenia. These have generated a dynamism of their own which is today inextricably inter-woven with giant industrial, economic, financial and so-called defence systems. This "giantism" has overshadowed or dwarfed all other spiritual, moral and cultural goals of less aggressive, peace-loving and sustainable communities, pushing towards them only standardised marketable expectations more in line with the ideologies of an industrial middle class. The mass poverty which we witness today and the global problems which have puzzled even the minds of those who thought they were controlling these Frankenstein forces are the by-products of this confusion between the goals and means.

In setting our goals, we have to remember that the present crises cannot be satisfactorily tackled without transcending the ideological barriers created in the minds of men by dividing themselves into socialist and capitalist camps. The attitude of mind with regard to the goals and means they have adopted as far as materialistic expectations

are concerned, seems to have no conceivable difference between them. Perhaps the time has come for humanity to turn seriously for guidance to the essence of spiritual teachings of world teachers to look for unifying factors of science and religion, human needs and global approaches, community organisations and world establishments, human personality and the living world, man and nature and, human goals and technological means.

I will give an example of such an endeavour with which I am deeply involved for the last twenty-eight years. It is the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka. Our goal is Sarvodaya, which means working towards the 'Awakening of All' in society. In the process of trying to awaken others, I try to awaken my own personality to the fullest in my short span of life. It is a simultaneous process taking place enabling me to turn inwards and outwards at the same time. My own Personality Awakening is my personal goal in life while the means I have adopted is to spread Loving Kindness to all living beings, to engage myself in Compassionate Actions to relieve the suffering of others, to experience the Joy of Living by making others happy and, lastly, to develop equanimity of skilfulness of mind to look at a problem deeply and resolve it. These four qualities in a human being are known as the Four Sublime Abodes in Buddhist philosophy.

'Shramadana' means the sharing of one's time, thought and energy in the service of oneself as well as others. In other words, here is an activity in which the rich and poor alike can join to awaken together.

From personality awakening, we come to family or village awakening based on the principles of sharing, pleasant language, constructive activity and equality. Every year we organise thousands of 'Shramadana Camps' (gift-of-labour camps), where tens and thousands of men, women and children voluntarily share their labour and resources together to build a new life for themselves with their own effort, according to their own perception of needs, following a plan they themselves have formulated and according to

their own pace. Sarvodaya groups which are spread out in nearly eight thousand villages out of twenty-three thousand villages in Sri Lanka, are not chasing after a consumer basket chosen for them by others. Instead, they have chosen a qualitatively higher goal of personality awakening within their family and community life. Satisfaction of basic and secondary needs is only a means to attain such a goal.

When it comes to the national level, they aim at a no-poverty, no affluent society. They believe that such a goal is culturally acceptable and sustainable and will lead to peace and harmony. At the universal level they believe that the affluent individuals, families, communities and nations in the world can be net-worked into their organisational structure in a mutually beneficial way. In fact, such links have been already established with individuals and organisations around the world including some in this country.

My purpose in this lecture is not to speak on Sarvodaya at length. I gave this example only to show that there are other direct ways in which the individual human being and the small community could be brought back to the centre of the global arena once again to play a decisive role to avert the total collapse of our civilization by its own top-heaviness. This is one simple way of teaching how to turn inwards, reaping the maximum benefit of our individual traditions and harnessing the forces of science and technology in line with the quality and joy of life. Many other living examples of similar efforts can be cited from around the world including those in affluent countries. The challenge is for the minority of giant-sized controllers of the world's economy, communication, resource utilisation, markets, political and military powers and so on to look within themselves as human beings and ask the questions. 'Are we really on a path of sanity or heading towards a total catastrophe?' If he respective answers are 'No' and 'Yes', then a tremendous opportunity yet exists to redirect our scientific research and technological inventions to achieve the goals that I have outlined, revitalising and empowering the small communities

around the world and bringing them together as a coherent whole to a global community.

If the responses are the other way around, we can only remind them of a saying of the Buddha from Dhammapada:

"Riches destroy the ignorant, yet not those who seek the future shore. Through his craving for material wealth, he destroys himself as if destroying others."

Some people may be rich, powerful and full of worldly knowledge at this moment. Irrespective of how they came to that state in the past, if now at this very moment they start cultivating wisdom and practise a path to non-craving and use all that they have acquired to awaken their own personalities through love and service to their fellow-beings, what a difference it will make to humanity and our planet! What a non-violent transformation such an awakening can bring about!

Having said this, we all know how difficult it is to bring about this awakening and transformation in human beings. It is more difficult when it comes to transforming institutional structures including the so-called development organisations. From personal experience, I know how much easier it is to get funds to do a research on poverty and write a report and provide food for thought for some elite to plan out their next research, than find funds to help the same target community to get them on their feet to a no-poverty society level. They cannot get over their affluent-oriented development goals and strategies geared to quantitative growth and hence cannot appreciate those goals and strategies that are directed more towards a quality of life which cannot be quantified in that manner.

However much it seems difficult to bring about this spiritual transformation in the people who are totally inclined towards a materialistic culture, yet we must not forget the fact that most people in the world are still living under pre-industrial conditions, close to nature and community. They also possess a cultural wealth in the form of life-styles which are total, sustainable and non-violent, with regard to

man and nature, a knowledge of education, agriculture and health which is holistic. Also they have organisational patterns which provide for less alienation and prevent the growth of political and technocratic hierarchies.

This new society cannot begin from modern Tokyo in Japan, but, it can begin from the less sophisticated communities, such as the ones in Northern Japan. It cannot begin from modern Colombo in Sri Lanka, but it can begin from the villages in rural areas. The reason is that the germ of this new society cannot be successfully cultured in post-industrial societies, where man's mind is too conditioned and confused by materialistic illusions. A good example is the amount of research and technological resource inputs that have gone into some of the creations at the Tsukuba Exhibition that I have already referred to. While there was so much that could contribute towards the solutions of problems we are talking about, there were quite a lot of computerized illusions created for the gullible, affluent consumers of the post-industrial, mass-consumption society.

The germ of this new society is in the old societies that still thrive in our world. From the old, we should be able to go in a continuum to the new, by-passing the modern society, which has created all the problems we are talking about. If this premise is accepted, the future science and technology, in relation to human survival and well-being, should cater to the needs and aspirations of the people of the old society, helping them to blaze a path to a new society.

Then, in this context, what should be the role of the already 'advanced' and 'industrialised' people, like those living in affluence? I think that the concerned ones among them should use their influence and strive to develop science and technology, in relation to a future society in the following pattern:

(1) The direction of science should not be aimed at only searching for order in the Universe. Rather, it should search for its meaning in relation to humanity.

(2) A value orientation in the choice of scientific research should be promoted.

(3) A humane approach in technology in relation to world's resources and life-support systems should be encouraged.

(4) Lateral communication systems enabling Citizens' Groups to play a more effective participatory role in political affairs should be developed, while discouraging the present power and party political systems which promote discord, moral degeneration and violence.

(5) All attempts should be made to scale down the giant economic, industrial and political structures, while giving direct support to small communities to combat their most pressing problems with regard to basic human needs, and at the same time, scaling up their systems to viable but human sized proportions, which would help them in the maximum utilization of all knowledge, present and past.

Perhaps Japan, with her cultural background should give serious thought to re-defining development goals and re-formulating development strategies more attuned to Asian spiritual and scientific thoughts and practices, which looked at man, society and nature as an integrated whole. A post-industrial revolution can be made only of such changes we can bring about in self and society, however much difficult it is.

When people of affluence live with a false sense of power and security, it is difficult to change them. But sheer necessity has compelled many poor and powerless communities in the world to empower themselves with whatever they possess and control so that they can take their destiny to their own hands. May be they will by-pass the modern society of the few towards a post modern society of the many creating a total revolution in and outside man leading to a society which is sane, humane and sustainable.

2.

Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka – Development from Below – A Case Study

Summary

The literal meaning of the words Sarvodaya Shramadana is "Awakening of All by voluntarily sharing people's resources, especially their time, thoughts and efforts."

In the mid 1950s, a team of high school teachers and students in Sri Lanka, selected a socially depressed and economically backward village to live , serve and learn from the village people during a school vacation. This study-service project was continued with more and more volunteers in an increasing number of villages and developed itself into an independent national reconstruction movement known today the world over as the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka.

Out of a total of 23,000 villages in Sri Lanka the Movement is active in 8000. In each village a number of youths from the village itself, who have undergone training in different skills of village reconstruction, work as full time workers. They inspire, learn from, educate, organise and work with men, women and children in their villages on a programme of village self-development carved out by the village community itself.

There are over 30,000 trained village youths working in their own communities improving the quality of life of their people. The sectors in which they work include nutrition, health, education, housing, water supply and sanitation, irrigation, agriculture, communication, savings and credit, rural industries and marketing, legal aid, institutional building and spirituo-moral development. In short they are participant-beneficiaries of an integrated rural awakening programme.

Economic development is not considered to be an isolated activity in the Sarvodaya Shramadana Programmes. It is viewed as an integral sector of a total awakening process of individuals, family units, village and urban communities, clusters of villages, the nation and the world community as a whole. Besides the economic sector the Sarvodaya integrated programme includes spiritual, moral, cultural, social and political awakening at all the above mentioned levels. Self-reliance, community participation and planned actions are the elements that bind together these different programmes to an integrated whole.

Sarvodaya villages go through five stages in their development process. First: An Initiation and Psychological Infrastructure Development Stage; Second: A Social Infrastructure and Training Stage; Third: Basic Needs Satisfaction and Institutional Incorporation Stage; Fourth: Income, Employment Generation and Self-financing Stage and Fifth: Sharing (with neighbouring villages) Stage.

The village communities go through these five stages basing their programmes on the three principles of Self-reliance, Community Participation and Planned Action. To assist them in their self-development efforts a national organisation known as the Sarvodaya Shramadana Association (Incorporated) has been established. It has its Headquarters in Moratuwa, a suburban city 20 kolometres from the centre of Colombo. The Association has estalished in every district of the country a district office and a district level Development Education Institute. At the sub-district level also there are Divisional Sarvodaya Offices and Divisional Sarvodaya Development Education Centres established. Altogether there are over three hundred such institutions in the country manned by a full-time trained staff. At one time approximately 2400 trainees from villages undergo residential training at these centres in skills needed for village development.

In effect Sarvodaya Shramadana releases a series of development processes the cumulative result of which is a mass movement of mutual help among village communities to improve their quality of life. As their objectives and plans have been agreed upon by themselves depending on their own resources whatever other forms of assistance they receive from the government or other agencies become complementary to their own efforts. Therefore, the continuity of the programmes are assured provided understanding and harmony within the members of the community are maintained. This is where the spiritual motivations, moral relationships and cultural patterns become important. In other words Social, Economic and Political developments are preceded by a strong mobilisation of those potentialities which are already inherent in people.

Sarvodaya does not try to build an affluent society. Neither does it believe that it is just or necessary for people to live in poverty. Therefore a No-Poverty, No-Affluence Society is the objective of the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement.

The thought of starting a people's movement, today known the world over as the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka, sprang up in the minds of a group of high school teachers and students in Colombo. They were dissatisfied with the formal educational system which was book-centred, examination-oriented, competitive and class-room cloistered. They felt they had a right to know more about the real conditions in which their rural countrymen lived and also an obligation towards them to contribute towards the improvement of their living conditions. Some further weaknesses they observed in the formal educational system that prevailed were:

(1). The vast disparities that existed between the educational opportunities of the rural and urban rich children and the rural and urban poor children; Most rural rich also sent their children to urban schools and hence the rural educational sector was neglected.

(2). The prevailing system only helped the existing disparities to continue and widen.

(3). As the system was oriented to provide a negligible number of professionals to keep the system going, the rest of the student population was allowed to drop by the wayside to find their own place in society.

(4). Personality awakening of the student by real life experiences in a cultural milieu conducive to such awakening was completely neglected.

The translation of this thought into action took place in the most backward villages in the country. Groups of students and teachers organised themselves during their vacations and school holidays and trekked into distant rural areas to gift their time, thought and effort to uplift rural communities. They learnt from villagers and shared with them. Thus it was a Study-Service Movement to begin with.

The objectives of the Movement at this stage could be summarised as follows:

(1). By concrete development action to awaken masses of

rural people to exploit their own development potential through self-help and self-reliance.

(2). To bring about a general recognition with regard to the value of utilizing labour and resources, which the people were voluntarily prepared to share for the development of their communities.

(3). To evolve in the country a grass-roots development leadership which is inspired by the people's traditional and cultural values and to gain knowledge through participatory experience in the practice of village development.

(4). To pave the way for a development theory and practice in which an integrated approach is made towards the development of the human person and family unit within his or her community, nation, and the world; this may be termed a 'non-violent revolutionary movement for changing man and society.'

Within ten years, that is, by 1967, the Sarvodaya Shramadana was more than an educational experience for students and villagers. It was a committed people's rural development movement working in over 100 villages. The number of villages kept on increasing and within the next five years Sarvodaya Shramadana was active in nearly 400 villages. A third dimension was added to the educational and developmental components of the programme at this stage. That is the dimension of structural change in society. In 1985, with 8000 villages having Sarvodaya programmes and with thousands of trained workers working shoulder to shoulder with village communities, Sarvodaya was trying to bring about a non-violent, revolutionary change in man and society beginning from bottom-up.

Development process in the village

Sarvodaya views development as an effort which should involve and thereby awaken the individual as well as his community. The totality of approach adopted by the movement does not confine its activities to a particular group in the society but attempts to involve each and every individual as one community including the infants and the aged.

The Sarvodaya vision on development is strongly based on the principles of the local value system as well as the Gandhian philosophy. However, it should be noted that this vision is further enriched by modern ideologies which are at least partly in line with the way of life professed by the movement. Moreover the existing vision of the movement on development is not based on pre-set, stereo-typed theories but the experience that the movement has gained through its successes, failures, challenges and drawbacks over a period of nearly thirty years. In very short terms, development for Sarvodaya is an integrated and total awakening process taking place in the individual as well as the society in their spiritual, moral, cultural, social, political and economic life.

Spiritual awakening is the inner development of man where qualities of compassion, beneficence, self-less service, altruistic joy and mental equipoise are developed. Moral awakening is the development of interpersonal relationships among human beings in such a way that sharing, pleasant language, constructive activities and equality in association become the guiding principles in their social conduct. Cultural awakening is working towards an ideal style of life where both poverty sued, which can be called "A No-Poverty, No-Affluence Society". In such a cultural milieu, a sustainable, non-polluted iety." In such a cultural milieu, a sustainable, non-polluted and non-violent society could be built without the alienation of human beings from one another.

Social, political and economic development should be strongly founded on these spiritual, moral and cultural value systems.

What is social awakening in a village community? According to Sarvodaya, there are eight components that together bring about social development. They are: Community Awareness, Education, Organisation, Participation, Human Rights, Health, Solidarity and Peace. The present party and power political structures, besides destroying the value systems also contribute greatly towards the perpetuation of the poverty cycle. Therefore, the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement works towards a people's participatory system of politics in a highly decentralised manner. It does not dabble in party and power politics. Similarly, the movement gives priority to

economic activities at the level of the community where production is firstly geared to satisfy their own basic human needs.

'Sarvodaya' means, 'the awakening of all' based on individual and community (collective) personality development. The awakening should first begin in the individual, in those most oppressed and those in dire want first, through the means of collective support, thus emphasising community action. This awakening has the economic aspect as one of its bases because without economic regeneration, no development is possible.

The essence of economic development, according to Sarvodaya philosophy, depends on the maximum utlisation of available resources. Such resources are divided into material and non-material (human) categories. The emphasis in Sarvodaya is that these resources should be mobilised for the locality itself, thus supporting the principle of self-reliance to the maximum possible practical extent. Economic development has to be based on skills. Sarvodaya, in its individual awakening and community awakening programmes, attempts to awaken, sharpen and develop skills. These skills are of two types: there are skills which enable a person to practise a certain profession or way of life, i.e., that of a carpenter, mason, preschool teacher, etc. and then there are skills that enable a person to work among people, ie., practising the professional skills more advantageously and fruitfully among human beings for their betterment. Sarvodaya believes that no skill is useful if one cannot put it into practical use.

Economic development, beginning from the weakest part or the sector of community is Sarvodaya's aim. This is observed even in the selection of villages where priority is accorded to the villages with distinct economic and other disadvantages. Actually, during the first five years, almost all the villages selected for Sarvodaya activities belonged to the under-privileged communties living in society. Such development should lead to a comprehensive improvement of the people's quality of life. Economic development is considered as being meaningless without parallel development in other areas of life. A balanced development, where material as well as non-material needs (such as, spiritual, social, cultural, etc.) are satisfied, is Sarvodaya's objective.

For this purpose, Sarvodaya has identified Ten Basic Human Needs as follows:

1. A clean and beautiful environment
2. A clean and adequate supply of water
3. Minimum clothing requirements
4. A balanced diet
5. A simple house to live in
6. Basic health care
7. Simple communication facilities
8. Minimum energy requirements
9. Total education
10. Cultural and spiritual needs

The satisfaction of these ten basic needs from below is the strategy of Sarvodaya. The final satisfaction of these basic needs in all, leads to the awakening of all. While the basic needs of all are satisfied, this balanced development also acts as a constraint on the development of non-basic needs of a few. Therefore, a kind of social control is established on the rich and the affluent not to increase their inordinate needs (conspicuous consumption) at the expense of those less fortunate than themselves.

The Sarvodians understood and learned about the village while living with the villagers. They also created a feeling of rare confidence in the villagers about themselves.

This confidence was created by organising activities such as the construction of much-needed wells for drinking purposes, latrines, roads and sub-roads, houses, schools, buildings and by mending fences, joining in their agricultural pursuits, teaching them basic skills and imparting knowledge while gathering the traditional knowledge of the people themselves.

The organisation of people in informal groups according to their interests and joining in these group activities became the cardinal strategy adopted. Instead of imposing a solution to people's problems, the group attempted to understand what the perception of the people was, with regard to a particular problem. They also attempted to find out whether the people had solutions of their own and let the people understand their

own problems, find ways to solve them and utilise resources they have by bringing such resources collectively together in this process, and making the maximum use of such resources.

It is a fact that Sarvodaya learned how much tradition could contribute towards a community's development from below: Sarvodaya worked in a number of underprivileged villages and from these learned the immense inspiration and guidance that a country's tradition could give in formulating a programme and strategy for development. Even in the case of the introduction of technology, the knowledge of tradition enabled one to mould and shape technology into an appropriate socio-culturally digestible condition.

Sarvodaya's subsequent experiences in a large number of villages in all parts of the island brought it into contact with different ethnic and religious groups inhabiting the island. The basic philosophy of Sarvodaya based on the potential goodness of all human beings, their inalienable equality and the enormous heights to which human beings could rise if they only learn to help each other, became the cornerstone of Sarvodaya's subsequent programmes.

It is true that the Indian Movements of Mahatma Gandhi and Vinoba Bhave inspired the pioneers of the Sarvodaya Movement in the late 1950s. It is also equally true that inspired by these great thinkers, Sarvodaya began its work in rural Sri Lanka and from practical experience, 'felt' the roots of the Sri Lankan Buddhist culture. The essence of man's equality, his own self-reliance and the great potential in all human beings, which could be re-kindled and then fortified by joining one another (in self-help) were derived from this Buddhist tradition. This essence transcended all kinds of man-made differences and embraced the ideals of all humanity wherever they are, irrespective of their caste, creed, race, religion, political opinion, etc.

Strategy

How can the broad objectives of the Sarvodaya Movement be achieved, is the vital question that has to be answered through the programme of the Movement.

Sarvodaya strongly believes that development should be

(a). A process which should involve the entire communty.
(b). Should be realised through an integrated approach since the Movement believes that interwoven problems cannot be solved in isolation, and,
(c). based on the above mentioned factors, the growth of the programme that is to be adopted should be an organic one which keeps the entire process well balanced.

In other words, this strategy aims to bring about

(1). Active participation of the community, and,
(2). Self-reliance.

The Movement, through its long-standing experience, believes that the communities have their own potential to realise these aims provided that they have

(1). A thought or an ideology of their own which unites them,
(2). Technologies and Methodologies which are within their own capacity, and,
(3). an Organisational Structure under their own control.

In fact, these three factors are the key components of the development process that takes place in rural or urban communities which can be identified as community units for the convenience of this study. The Movement believes that as long as problems are inter-related in any geo-political setting, no community could maintain its self-reliance in the long term unless they are made inter-dependent.

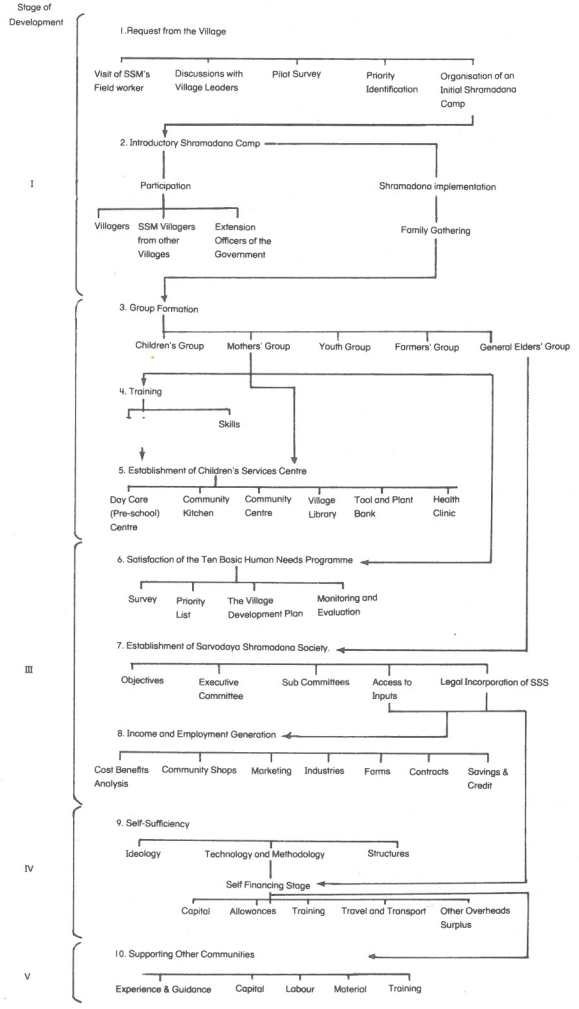
However, it is necessary to elaborate further on the process which is supposed to take place invariably in any Sarvodaya community, before going to the details of a possible amalgamation of communities at a secondary stage of the same process. This can be seen in the following chart:

Chart I

Ideology/Objectives	Technologies & Methodologies	Structures
1. Awakening of the individual based on the four golden principles for the awakening of the personality namely Respect for Life, Compassionate Actions, Altruistic Joy and Equanimity.	Shramadana - Gift of Labour Camps.	Village Groups
2. Awakening of the Community based on the four traditional principles for the awakening of the Society, namely, Sharing, Pleasant Language, Constructive Activity and Equality in Association.	Family Gathering	Sarvodaya Shramadana Society
3. Provision of opportunities to learn leadership and appropriate technical skills.	Training-Formal and Informal	Gramadana Cluster of SSM-Unions of Sarvodaya Shramadana Societies.
4. Priority: Production for Basic Human Needs Satisfaction/ Self-Sufficiency	The Village Development Plan. Promotion of Savings & Credit	Sarvodaya Shramadana Societies/ Gramadana Centres/Divisional Centres
5. Increase income for rural areas and reduce losses from exploitation	Income and Employment generating activities	Divisional, District & National level Support Structures

What is indicated in Chart I are the broad contents of the three key elements of the process. This can be seen from somewhat of a different perspective in Chart II with specific activities in line with the different stages of development.

Chart II
SARVODAYA'S PACKAGE FOR PARTICIPATION AND SELF-RELIANCE



Stages of Self-development

Stage I - Initiation and Psychological Infra-Structure development stage:

Sarvodaya enters a village community in response to an invitation from it. A convenient date is fixed and a Sarvodaya full-time volunteer visits the village. He explains to the people the objectives and principles of Sarvodaya and introduces the idea of holding a Shramadana Camp to satisfy one or more felt needs of the community which can be satisfied by pooling together the labour and resources within the village and the vicinity. A pilot survey is then conducted before the villagers decide about the type of work to be done through the camp. The chosen activity may be the construction of roads, digging of wells, building tank bunds to collect water or irrigation canals. Always a labour - intensive project is chosen. Then the dates are fixed and various tasks are allocated to individuals and groups in the village, and the representative from the Movement undertakes to organise the labour, tools and other requirements that the villagers may need in addition to what they can find.

The few weeks preceding the Shramadana Camp, a high degree of enthusiasm is generated among the villagers. The Sarvodaya Gramadana worker in the area and perhaps other experienced Sarvodaya workers help the village at this stage in their organisational work.

During a Shramadana Camp, community meditation, community cooking and eating, community singing and dancing and working together, gifting labour from six to eight hours per day, result in the members of the community gathering together for their own self-development with a strong psychological affinity.

This also provides an opportunity for neighbouring villages, government extension workers and others to come and participate in the camp and also take part in general meetings known as the Family Gatherings, which are held two or three times a day. These Family Gatherings give an opportunity for the villagers to learn about the experiences of other village communities in similar development efforts.

Stage II - Social Infra-structure Formation and Training Stage:

Shramadana Camps motivate the village community to continue its self-development work in different ways. They may organise a number of follow-up camps on their own. They will want a pre-school constructed for a nursery programme to be conducted in their village. For this purpose, a Mothers' Group may be organised and also a couple of young women chosen to undergo training in pre-school education, nutrition and health-care. A Sarvodaya Youth Group may also be organised and they too may require a few of their leaders to get trained at a Sarvodaya Development Educational Institute. Therefore, during this stage, while a social infra-structure is laid in the village, a number of leaders also get trained. On their return to the village after undergoing training, generally six Sarvodaya Groups are organised within the village.

These six groups are:

1. A Pre-School Children's Group.
2. School-going Children's Group.
3. Mothers' Group.
4. Youth Group.
5. Farmers' Group and,
6. General Elders' Group.

The village community with available local resources will construct a small building where the Pre-school and the Day-care Centre could be conducted. Health care-programmes, nutrition programmes and other welfare services also get systematically organised during this stage.

The Pre-school is organised mainly for the benefit of those who cannot spend money and send their children to nursery schools. Usually the Mothers' Group takes upon itself the task of performing all the activities associated with the pre-school. The children are not only socialized here but also their health is looked after. A nutritious meal is given to them and a small plot of land is cultivated as the common garden of the school. The children are taught to save and their savings are accumulated in a Savings and Credit Scheme to which even their parents are motivated to contribute. The children learn how to share labour and live within the community.

The children upto the age of 14 years are initiated into various skills that would be useful to them later in life. They learn how to save money, share work with one another, develop qualities of leadership and widen their knowledge so far gained by means of the education they receive.

The members of the Youth Group are encouraged to develop skills. This is done mainly by making them undergo training sessions at the Sarvodaya Centres in carpentry, masonry, agriculture and animal husbandry, batik, printing, technological knowledge and technological training, etc. When the trainees return to their village, they are encouraged to work within the village itself. The necessary capital is often provided or collected from outside for the trainee to make the maximum use of the training which he or she received.

Sarvodaya considers women as a vital element in development. Particularly the role of mothers is considered vital by Sarvodaya. Every attempt is made, therefore, to organise the mothers, make them understand the extent of their potential contribution and motivate them to contribute their share towards the development of the village. For example, mothers are motivated to look after the home garden, where they grow much needed food items. Mothers also learn skills such as sewing their own clothes, animal husbandry, i.e. rearing cows or bee-keeping and thus contribute something additional to their home-budgets.

The Elders' Group will co-ordinate all activities going on in a village and in addition they may form a formal Sarvodaya Sharamadana Society in a village.

The youth leaders who are trained from the village play a key-role at this stage. They conduct a house-to-house social and economic survey in the village which enables them to find out to which extent the basic human needs of the community pertaining to Environment, Water, Clothing, Food, Housing, Health, Communication, Energy, Education, and Cultural and Spiritual needs are satisfied. Then they would relate these needs to the various groups in the village and then implement the necessary programmes.

Stage III - Basic Needs Satisfaction and Institutional Incorporation Stage;

The Sarvodaya Movement believes in a strong decentralised structure. The most basic of these is the Sarvodaya Shramadana Society of the village. With the formation of the Sarvodaya Shramadana Society, the village enters a third phase. This Society could be registered with the Government as a separate legal entity and then it can own land and property, have bank accounts, obtain loans and start various economic activities. In other words, economic activities proper begin in a village at this stage.

At this stage the training of village level workers in simple account keeping, marketing, project formulation, monitoring and evaluation has to be carried out. The Sarvodaya Divisional and District Centres normally cater to these needs. It is always emphasised that priority in production should be given to satisfy their own needs. Their own savings and credit should be utilised to the maximum and biological farming should be encouraged. Self-sufficiency, in as many basic needs as possible is also targeted. The village society aims to produce enough so as to generate an income so that full-time village level workers such as the pre-school workers, health care workers and community development workers are maintained by them.

At his stage, the village may not be fully self-financing. However, since Sarvodaya sees a difference between self-reliance and self-financing, it can be said that villages which belong to this stage are self-reliant in terms of development ideology, decision making and organisational structures, etc.

Stage IV - Self-financing Stage:

The villages which belong to this stage are self-financing as far as their financial inputs are concerned. For instance, these villages can pay the allowances of their full-time workers and are able to meet their travelling and transport costs, etc. through locally generated resources.

Stage V - Surplus and Sharing Stage:

Villages in the fifth stage are not only self-financing but are also in a position to help the other villages within their cluster of villages, with the surplus of produce made in the village.

These last two stages at this time can be considered as hypothetical stages since Sarvodaya does not have that many villages belonging to these stages. However, the Movement believes that one of the aims at this time is to make a concentrated effort to turn a Third Stage village into a Fourth Stage village.

The Sarvodaya villages did not function as clusters or groups until a few years ago. Although the programmes and activities introduced to the individual villages were integrated ones, still these villages were functioning in isolation. If there was any integration of activities among the villages in the same area it was done by either a full-time worker or one of the village centres of the Movement. Concrete integration of the programme among the villages was not to be seen. However, with the introduction of various economic activities in order to generate income and employment for the people as well as to make their village programmes independent and self-financing, the necessity to have links with income generating activities in other villages was seen. In other words, it was found that economic activities introduced to a larger geographical area involving a number of villages or community units were more feasible than such activities functioning in one village in isolation. A number of factors have contributed to this development.

1. To make a breakthrough and have an impact on the existing rural economic structure it is necessary to organise communities at a scale larger than the small village units since most of the economic activities involve a process which cannot be confined to a small village unit in terms of organisation, inputs, markets, etc.

2. It is not possible to compete with the rural elites who are organised though informally, and who dominate the rural economy.

3. It gives a better opportunity for communities to share their resources and energies as well as feel more confident about their activities.

4. It would help them to channel resources and technical assistance provided by the government extension services in a better co-ordinated way.

A cluster of villages which make a Gramadana area is co-ordinated by a Gramadana worker whose subsistence in the long term will have to be met by the cluster of villages that are covered by the worker. Furthermore, it is expected that a group of village clusters in a Division would form a union of villagers in the Division and later this would continue upto the district level.

Economic Development

Sarvodaya's economic activities are directed to the individual and the community. The lowest and the weakest are sought out and the helping hand of all is first extended to them. If their houses are in need of repair, the Sarvodaya groups get together and collect all the necessary materials from the village itself. Timber is collected, tiles are collected and cement is bought from the Collective Fund. All the villagers share in this community activity. They donate their labour for one or more days and together with the family members of the man or woman whose house is in need of repair, undertake all the necessary repairing activities.

If there is a group of people for whom no facilities to obtain drinking water exist, then the Sarvodaya groups and the members of the Sarvodaya Shramadana Society come together and have a discussion as to how best this problem could be solved. Is the digging of wells the answer? If so, from where could one get the specialised knowledge? To what extent is such knowledge and experience available within the village? etc.

Sometimes Sarvodaya links its economic programmes to other already existing programmes of other organisations including those of the government. When the government constructs houses for the poor through its Village Re-awakening Programme, Sarvodaya helps the villagers to utilise the

materials given by the government and also helps them to build their own houses. This is done by organising collective work-sharing camps, where people donate their skills and efforts. For example, the carpenters and masons work in the construction of houses. At the same time young men in the village will also learn such skills under their tutelage. Thus, while the houses are being built, skills are imparted. This excellent co-operation between the government programmes and Sarvodaya is another aspect of the economic development activities of the Movement.

Each village chooses what is appropriate for its own development. No one from the outside can impose such decisions on them. It is the villagers who decide. But, invariably, all villages do have some Sarvodaya groups, the Pre-school, the Community Shop, etc.

A Community Shop in a village is created with two purposes in mind. Firstly, it enables the people in the village to sell their goods at a reasonable price and secondly, it facilitates their buying of other goods without being exploited by middle-men. Specially in agricultural production, it is the middle-men who really get the best of it. So, if village agriculture needs fostering, the strong hand of the middlemen has to be taken away. By the strategy of collective, organised action centred in the Community Shop, Sarvodaya hopes to reduce the influence of the middle-men.

The basic principles of Sarvodaya Economic Development, if one may summarise them, are as follows:

1). Economic development cannot be taken in isolation from other aspects such as the social, psychological, spiritual, religious, etc. It is a vital part of the total development of a human being.

2). The individual and the group need parallel development. Therefore, all efforts should be made in this direction.

3). The emphasis on self-reliance should be the goal of development. For this purpose, the people's personalities should be awakened, their skills should be developed and only a minimum of help from outside should be expected.

4). People's participation should be the basis of economic development. Therefore, every attempt should be made for people to come together. All people's groups should be made to come together. All ages, sexes, occupations thus come together. This entails the utilization of all formal and non-formal groups present among the people.

5). Development should begin with the weakest and the least powerful groups, and then go upwards. The identification of Basic Human Needs and their satisfaction follows. Such Basic Needs in all should be satisfied.

6). All round development and the maximum popular participation enable people to make their own decisions, implement these decisions themselves and evaluate such impacts. Gradually they become particularly conscious and a People's Power is thus generated.

3

Strategic Issues in Development Management – Lessons from Sarvodaya

Introduction

Sarvodaya is a mass movement where many thousands of people are involved as participants-beneficiaries. They are spread out in about 8000 village and urban communities across the island and are engaged in a large variety of constructive activities aimed at improving their quality of life. The direct involvement of people in Sarvodaya related activities may be as high as 3 million men, women and children. There are around 40,000 full time Sarvodaya workers who are giving the necessary direction, management skills and an organizational form to the Movement.

Within the Movement there are a large number of activities which may be called 'programmes' and 'projects'. Examples of programmes are:

1. Sarvodaya Children's Services Programme
2. Sarvodaya Nutrition Programme
3. Sarvodaya Health Care Programme
4. Sarvodaya Rural Technical Services programme and so on.

Like this there are specialised development and welfare programmes which are formulated, implemented, monitored, evaluated and upgraded on a sectoral basis at national level. Within these programmes, projects are planned and implemented at divisional and district levels. For example, construction of a gravity water scheme for a community, construction of a hundred wells to provide drinking water for the people, rural savings and credit programmes for a specific number of villages or farmers and similar activities, carried out in smaller geographical areas are termed projects.

Generally, all these programmes and projects involve all aspects of manpower, budgetary, technical and resource management. Still the size of the movement is such that it is not possible to follow very effective but expensive management methods mainly due to resource constraints. Therefore the pioneers of the Movement were forced to

adopt other innovative means to make a success of their efforts.

However, this paper does not deal with detailed management procedures of the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement (SSM) but it would discuss the management aspects of the SSM in a much broader sense.

In examining the management aspect of the development processes of the SSM, it would be more convenient to grasp the situation if it is studied in the context of the historical development of the SSM, due to the fact that its management mechanisms are developed in line with changing needs. The SSM originated in 1958 as an educational experiment where urban school children and their teachers were engaged in study service camps in some of the most under privileged communities in Sri Lanka. During its first decade of development as a voluntary organisation it was small in size, and centralized in management expertise. Activities were carried out in villages scattered in different parts of the country with central guidance even at this very early stage of development. SSM was able to form itself into a movemental character at national level.

The second decade of development of SSM's history was a story of rapid growth. The activities of SSM grew from a few hundred villages to several thousand within a period of about six years. Increasing demand among rural communities for SSM to guide their own development, failure of the socialist movements to consolidate their gains in rural areas and improve the conditions of the people, and the people-centred methodologies developed by the movement made it possible for the SSM to widen its network. An expansion of this nature totally changed the management needs of the SSM. In fact, the SSM had to go through a wide range of management problems, which will be discussed later, during this period of transition.

SSM's perspective on management of development

SSM in identifying its long term goals, developing its development ideology as well as in setting priorities has

firmly based its thinking on long standing roots of the value system of the community. Whenever any technical or management element which is of foreign origin is introduced, it would be adopted according to the local conditions so that problems of acceptability could be avoided. Sri Lankans for more than twenty five centuries had developed management systems of their own based on these principles of the value system and on adaptability.

Water management and resource management systems of the Sri Lanka agrarian society can be cited as examples. Planning, decision making, resource allocation and supervision etc. related to these activities were carried out with the consensus of the community under the leadership of its senior members. These processes of management had been institutionalized mainly under the "Gam-Sabhawa" (village council) which was the lowest unit in the administrative structure.

Another distinctive feature of the traditional management system was the perception of the reality. In other words, members of the community had a right vision on the size of the country which was very small. "Small is manageable" was the concept behind management and technology. Though these people built complex and vast irrigational systems they were only aggregations of small and decentralized units.

Strongly based on this line of thinking SSM has attempted to use modern knowledge of management so that it would not be a burden alienating people from development. Though the management concept in the SSM is based on achievement orientation, it has not confined itself only to the increase of material, physical and monetary benefits. SSM with its development in spiritual, moral, cultural, social, political and economic terms, firmly believes in adhering to basic principles of management such as plan formulation, plan implementation and evaluation through a management process where policy and decision makers are the community. This is why SSM professes that self-reliance of projects can be achieved not only in terms of

self-financing but also in terms of ideology, methodologies and organizational structures. What is meant here by methodologies is that development programmes and projects are planned, implemented, evaluated and replanned by people themselves. In order to achieve self-reliance of this sort SSM has found a method through its experience of training the community in simple and conceivable systems through both practical and formal means.

SSM is aware that successful management depends on realistic planning. As such it has felt the need for improved programme and project designs which has to be stressed. However, again through its own experience, SSM has witnessed a possible danger in detailed technocratic scheduling of activities for they might damage the local initiative and enthusiasm. Unlike in cost-benefit and profit maximisation oriented development projects, little attempt is made in SSM projects to place the management element under a strait-jacket. In a situation such as this, where people have to understand management and actively involve themselves in it, the system to be adopted has to be a very flexible one. Moreover SSM encourages creativity and innovative skills of the community as a part of its effort to bring about active participation. This further stresses the need for flexibility in management.

Organisational structure of the SSM

Studying the dimensions of the organizational structure is necessary to get an insight of the management processes of the SSM. Generally this 'bottom up' structure can be divided into two parts, namely, the organizational infra-structure and organizational supporting structure. Organizational infra-structure of the SSM can be regarded as the structure of its target group with some 8000 communities at the bottom. The purpose of the organizational supporting structure, consisting of various levels of management, is to cater to the needs of the movement to strengthen the infra-structure with backstopping. (See figures 1 and 2)

Functioning of the Infra-structure

SSM's Infra-structure at its lowest level is composed of groups of various ages and sex and professional groups existing in the community so that each and every member could participate in their own development. Each of these groups such as Children's, Mothers' and Farmers' etc. have their own specific activities. Representatives from these groups and other community members form the Sarvodaya Shramadana Society which is a legally recognized entity with its independent rules. It has direct access to resources and could sue and be sued, hire and fire personnel and undertake contracts.

Decision Areas

In the decision making process related to the management of activities going on at this level, the following decision areas could be identified:

1. Identification of an entry point to the development process: It will be the responsibility of the village community to identify the most suitable entry point with the guidance of the SSM fulltimer in introducing an action programme. This entry point may vary from place to place depending on the existing conditions. For instance shramadana to satisfy basic needs can be the entry point at one village while bringing down the extension network for the other and giving food aid for another.

2. Man power: Identification of leadership for the mobilisation of village groups is the next decision area. In identifying village leadership, preference is always given to select functional leaders and avoid reactionary traditional leaders of the existing power structure. This does not imply that SSM would totally ignore the traditional leadership but it does encourage such leadership provided it is positive and progressive. Selection of various functional leaders for training as well is the responsibility of SSM groups. After the completion of training in various services, management

and skills, these functional leaders together with the community plan out and implement further development activities.

3. Institution Building: This can be regarded as a vital decision area since the entire village programme is based on the institutional structure at this level. This becomes even more important in the context of badly divided village groups due to party politics. Bringing people together under a common programme with its own aims and objectives is no easy task. Decision making at this point has to be an extremely careful process.
4. Need Prioritization: Identification of basic needs of the community and prioritising them realistically taking availability of resources into account in order to satisfy these needs, relates to direct formulation of the village development plan. Unrealistic planning may cause management misadventures and end up with disappointment and the eventual collapse of the entire programme.
5. Project Identification: Income and employment generating projects, which aim to make the programme self-financing at a later stage, will be introduced depending on the satisfaction of a few pre-requisites.
    1. The community should have a solidly established organizational structure.
    2. It should have a successful track record of continuous basic needs satisfaction activities. Village communities (SSS) are capable of measuring these levels with a set of indicators. In identifying projects a careful study of the needs against availability of limited resources will be made.

In order to make the development process in the community, from the initiation until self-reliance, fully under the management of the villagers and make it systematic and target oriented, it has been carefully phased out parallel to the five decision areas. (see figure 3) It can be seen in this flow chart that gradually with the establishment of the institutional structure, activities and

management responsibilities of the SSM groups in the community increases. Through the experience they gather over time, it has been proven that in more than a few hundred communities self-reliance has been realised.

Stage I – Introductory Stage:

Sarvodaya enters a community through an invitation from it and introduces the technique and the concept of Shramadana (sharing of labour) in order to bring the villagers together. A high degree of enthusiasm is generated with the fulfilment of a basic need with locally available resources. No concrete follow up activities can be seen at this stage except for the enthusiasm of the villagers.

Stage II – Group formation Stage:

Sarvodaya groups such as the children's group, mothers' group, youth group and farmers' group are being formed at this stage so that already motivated villagers could further participate and organize themselves in development activities.

The establishment of the Children's Services Centre also takes place at this stage through Shramadana.
Functional leaders selected by the groups are sent to SSM's Development Educational Institutes for further training.

Stage III – Need Satisfaction Stage:

The village groups at this stage function with a fairly high spirit and interest with the guidance of their own trained workers.

Formation of a Sarvodaya Shramadana Society in the village takes place and its registration with the government makes it independent in decision making and accessibility to resources.

The village development plan is introduced to satisfy the ten basic human needs* of the community.

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* 1. Environment, 2. Water, 3. Clothing, 4. Food, 5. Housing, 6. Health, 7. Energy, 8. Total Education, 9. & 10. Spiritual and Cultural needs.

Income and employment generating activities also will be set up through the villages which belong to this stage, but are still not self-financing. However, since SSM sees a difference between self-reliance and self-financing it can be said that villages which belong to this stage are self-reliant in terms of development ideology, decision making and organizational structures etc.

Stage IV – Self-financing Stage:

The villages which belong to this stage are self-financing as far as their financial inputs are concerned. For instance, these villages could pay the allowances of their fulltime workers, meet travelling and transport costs etc. through locally generated resources.

Stage V – Surplus Stage:

The villages in this stage are not only self-financing but are also in a position to help the other villages with the surplus of produce made in the village. The last two stages can be considered as hypothetical stages since SSM does not have that many villages belonging to these two stages. However, the Movement believes that one of its aims at this period of time should be to make a concentrated effort to turn a third stage village to the fourth stage.

It should also be mentioned that monitoring is involved in each of the above mentioned stages of development under the guidance and supervision of the full timers at village level and above.

SSM villages do not go through this phased out development process in isolation. On the contrary they have been grouped into clusters of five or ten villages.

SSM villages did not function as clusters or groups until a few years ago. Although the programmes and activities introduced to the individual villages were integrated ones, still these villages were functioning in isolation. If there was any integration of activities among the villages in the same area it was done by a full time worker of one of the village centres of the SSM. Concrete integration of the

programme among the villages was not to be seen. However, with the introduction of various economic activities in order to generate incomes and employment for the people as well as to make their village programmes independent and self financing, the necessity to have links with income generating activities in the other villages was seen.

In other words, it was found that economic activities introduced to a larger geographical area involving a number of villages or community units were more feasible than such activities functioning in one village in isolation. A number of factors have contributed to this development.

1. To make a break through and have an impact on the existing rural economic structure it is necessary to organize communities at a scale larger than the small village units since most of the economic activities involve a process which cannot be confined to a small village unit in terms of organization, inputs and markets etc.
2. It is not possible to compete with the rural elites who are organized though informally, and who dominate the rural economy.
3. It gives a better opportunity for communities to share their resources and energies as well as feel more confident about their activities.
4. It would help them to channel resources and technical assistance provided by the government extension services in a better co-ordinated way.

A cluster of villages which make a Gramadana area is supposed to be co-ordinated by a Gramadana worker whose subsistence in the long term will have to be met by the contributions made by the cluster of villages that are covered by the same worker. Furthermore, it is expected that a group of village clusters in a Division would form a union of villages in the Division and later this would continue up to the district level.

Functions of the SSM's village worker:

SSM has identified four main areas of function for the lowest level village worker who invariably is a young woman pre-school teacher. Though a specific job description has not been given as is done where typical management procedures are being established, a more practical identification of functions to be carried out, together with the participant-beneficiaries, has been made.

The key areas of functions of this worker are as

1. The philosopher guide and the advisor of the community.
2. Liaison worker between the SSM and village community in providing necessary inputs.
3. Intermediary between government development projects in the area and the community.
4. Data collector and reporter. Collection of data related to the level of basic needs satisfaction in order to formulate the development plan and monitoring the general programme to be reported to the supporting structure of the SSM.

Management problems at this level:

One of the most felt management problems at this level is the excessive work load the village worker has to carry out. The village worker, who is primarily the pre-school teacher handles a variety of activities such as nutrition, health care, group formation, savings and credit, home gardening, marketing systems etc. and many other day to day functions. Every internal and external evaluation made during the period of the last fifteen years has greatly appreciated the motivation and the commitment of this worker. However, due to lack of resources it is no longer possible for the SSM to pay any decent salary or increase the number of trained workers. However, with great difficulty SSM has managed to increase the number of workers in some villages and convince those communities to take care of the remuneration and other needs of these workers. Strengthening of the supporting structure immediately above this worker also has lessened her burden.

Only a very few village workers or members of SSSs so far have received any training in management. Though most of them have received two weeks and three month training in services and skills it is without any fundamental knowledge of business administration they have been handling income generating activities.

Trained workers dropping out of the programme due to various reasons mainly economic, also have created serious problems in many a village communities.

Lack of resources to support most of the needs of the village programme can be regarded as a key problem in the programme in general.

Organizational Supporting Structure:

Decision Areas:

1. Strategy: Developing the Movemental strategy at national level is a vital decision area affecting the overall programme. Adaptations and deviations from the mainstream of strategy are necessary depending on different requirements of different communitites.
2. Policy: Policy development at national level is the responsibility of the central association of the SSM where the Executive Council which meets at least once a month makes policy decisions in line with the objectives and principles of the constitution of the SSM.
3. Coordination – Decisions are made on coordination of various parts of the internal structure as well as coordination between SSM's activities with government's programmes and projects and development activities carried out by other local and foreign organizations. Prior to coordination, it is decided at the policy level whether SSM should co-operate with such outside programmes or alienate itself from such activities depending on the compatibility of objectives of such programmes with those of the SSM.
4. Selection of most needed projects based on a priority list within a setting where resources are very limited. Allocation of resources on different projects calls for careful decision making.

Functions of the Supporting Structure

Gramadana Centre:

1. Assisting village workers in organising their routine activities.
2. Coordination of resources among the villages in the cluster.
3. Monitoring and reporting.
4. Coordination of economic activities among the villages in the cluster.

Divisional Centre:

1. Appraising village and cluster plans.
2. Selection of projects to be supported.
3. Monitoring and reporting.
4. Liaison between District Centres.
5. Intermediary between extension network and communities.
6. Disbursement of funds.

Development Education Institute:

1. Formation of district plans and budgets based on the plans recommended by Divisional Centres.
2. Coordination of activities in Divisions and clusters.
3. Making disbursements.
4. Training of village leaders.
5. Liaison with Government departments and Ministries.
6. Liaison with the Headquarters and other District Centres.

SSM's Management Training Institute:

The latest addition to the institutional supporting structure of the SSM has been the centrally located Sarvodaya Management Training Institute (SMTI). It aims to train rural cadres as well as members of SSM's village groups in management skills. Added to this is its consultancy service in establishing and promoting rural entrepreneurship. SMTI offers both short and medium term courses in general management, decision making and problem solving, planning, financial management etc. SSM's goal is to train

all full timers as well as elected officials of SSM's village groups through SMTI in management.

New issues in Development Management

Rapid growth of the SSM from a few hundred villagers to several thousand within a very short period has surfaced new issues of which SSM has had no experience before.

1. Centralization vs. decentralization: The immediate effect of such a growth was the inability of the centralized structure to cope with a fast widening net-work of villages. Establishment of Development Educational Institutes at District level, Divisional Centres at Divisional level and Gramadana Centres, which are of very recent origin, enabled the SSM to cope with the increasing demand for coordination, training, technical and financial assistance and other inputs. Still these institutions at various levels were parts of the central organization based at the headquarters.

   As such, though it was possible to cater to the needs of increasing numbers of villages this could not be regarded as a fully decentralized system of management due to the fact that planning and resource allocation was largely a central function. It was perceived at this stage that the only way out of this centralization was to separate the central association which is the legal entity with a constitution, from the People's Movement i.e. the ever growing village activities and the number of communities. This was followed by the establishment of the most innovative of SSM's management strategies which was the Sarvodaya Shramadana Society. SSS is an extremely independent entity in decision making, the only binding factors are the philosophy of the SSM with some inputs in the short and medium terms. At present Divisional and District plans and budgets are aggregations of SSS plans and budgets are aggregations of SSS plans and budget. SSM in this way, has been able to turn the system upside down and therefore no longer is the management of the target group activities central.

2. Voluntarism vs. Professionalism: During its first decade of development SSM has no professionalism in its activities but was entirely functioning on the principles of voluntarism. However, the growth of the SSM required a large number of specially trained and experienced people to handle training, administration, management and technical aspects of the programme. Moreover the situation necessitated that these personnel work on a full time basis. The situation prior to this was that SSM had only a few full timers with a large number of part time volunteers who already were employed or occupied elsewhere. Introduction of professionals to the SSM created some serious problems about which the leadership was very concerned. One such problem was the build up of an unavoidable bureaucracy which was not the most desirable situation for a voluntary movement entirely based on spirit, charisma and commitment. However, the handling of this situation with the least possible damage to those principles and features was the responsibility of the leadership. This is where again the separation of the Central association from the vast Movement has become effective. Bureaucracy is confined within the association which is much smaller than the Movement composed of several thousand independent village units.

Another problem surfaced by this new situation was the anomalies in remuneration between professionals and full time volunteers. This posed a great danger since it could lead to the loss of spirit and commitment or in other words a change of values on the part of the volunteers. This had to be handled through a number of different ways. Firstly, volunteers are educated on new requirements of the SSM. Secondly, every possible opportunity is given and volunteers are encouraged to undergo further training locally or abroad and become professionals themselves. Thirdly, in recruiting professionals preference is given to those who already have had some part time voluntary experience with the SSM. It is only when somebody with SSM background could not be found that a total outsider would be recruited. Fourthly,

increasing allowances of volunteers, though with great difficulty, and Fifthly, a further separation of the work units of these professionals by making the relevant institutes independent have been undertaken.

Still, there were many positive results of professionalising the SSM to some extent. For instance planning has become an important element in every aspect of SSM's activities. Monitoring and evaluations are now established systems. In general, a management system has been established.

3. Expansion vs. Consolidation: Because of the increasing demand for the SSM, expansion at a certain stage became uncontrollable. Being a people's Movement, no discouragement was given until very recently for expansion. But, even with the introduction of management systems the professional quality of work could not be maintained when expansion took place at such a rapid rate, Quantity vs. Quality was the choice SSM had to make. Awareness creation at the widest possible scale is a need for a people's Movement functioning at national level. Still, if it is not possible to change the way of life of people for better through concrete activities in the process, the situation in the long term could be disastrous for a people's Movement. SSM was fully aware of these negative aspects.

Moreover, there had been pressure on the part of SSM's donors for the control of expansion and for consolidation in a certain number of communities. Now the programmes have been consolidated within five thousand communities. In other words donors support only this number. Still, SSM handled this issue in such a way that expansion and consolidation are taking place simultaneously.

Now, the consolidated programme has been reinforced and every effort is made to push the third stage villages through to the fourth stage so that they become independent and go out of the field of assistance by the supporting structure. To fill the gap created thereby new villages could come in. The expansion process, in this way, has been

slowed down but is still continuing to take place with much added quality.

Conclusions:

1. Sarvodaya did not start with pre-conceived management systems. The management systems evolved as responses to challenges with the development of the Movement.
2. The emphasis was not on efficient management to begin with but was on helping people to be conscious of their problems, discover methods and technologies to deal with their problems and help build structures that could be managed with their own resources and know how.
3. Priority was given for basic needs satisfaction and the skills needed to achieve that objective with self-reliance, maximum community participation and planning for self development. Management was an integral part of the self development process rather than an alien element introduced from outside.
4. Once the basic physical and psycho-social infrastructures were developed and clusters of villages came into direct confrontation with the social, political and economic institutions at higher levels, formal management systems to wrest advantages to themselves from the elite groups were progressively introduced.
5. By the establishment of a special structure of the Movement known as the Sarvodaya Economic Enterprises Development Services (SEEDS), the Movement now tries to grapple with the macro level established economic institutions so that whatever disadvantages they have imposed presently on the rural sector could be removed, enabling the poorer sectors of the community to get an increased income and improve their quality of life.
6. As the Movement progresses taking advantage of the democratic and progressive policies of governments, further management structures have to be evolved incorporating into it the main social and political streams of national life also.

Figure I

INSTITUTIONAL (ORGANIZATIONAL) SUPPORTING STRUCTURE
Head Quarters
Finance Management
General Administration
Programme and Project Formation
Field Operations
Monitoring and Evaluation
National Level
Field Director
Development Education Institute
Coordination
Training
Resource Allocation
Monitoring
District Level
Divisional Centre
Coordination
Resource Allocation
Intermediation between extension and the community
Monitoring
Divisional Level
District Co-ordinator
Gramadana Centre
Coordination
Liaison with upper levels
General guidance
Monitoring
Sub-Divisional Level
Sarvodaya Shramadana Society
INSTITUTIONAL (ORGANIZATIONAL) INFRA-STRUCTURE
Planning
Implementation
Monitoring
Evaluation
Village level
Children's Group
Mothers Group
Youth Group
Farmers Group
General Elders Group

SARVODAYA ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP OF LANKA JATIKA SARVODAYA SHRAMADANA SANGAMAYA

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

PRESIDENT

- SARVODAYA SHRAMADANA INTERNATIONAL
- SARVODAYA PUBLICATIONS
- RESEARCH INSTITUTE
- SARVODAYA WOMEN'S FORUM
- INTERNAL AUDIT

- SUWASETHASEWA LTD.
- SARVODAYA S. MOVEMENT GENERAL SECRETARIAT
- TEMP. STRUCTURES COLSULTANTS /TASK FORCES
- SARVODAYA ECONOMIC ENTERPRISES DEV. SERVICES
- PEOPLE'S PEACE OFFENSIVE

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

DIRECTOR-ADMINISTRATION

- RECEPTION
- PERSONNEL & ADMINISTRATION
- TRANSPORT
- PURCHASING UNIT
- STORES
- PUBLIC RELATIONS; PRESS
- LIBRARY SERVICES
- SECURITY
- HOSTELS & CANTEEN SERVICES
- INSURANCE
- REALESTATE, BLDGS., LEGAL MATTERS

DIRECTOR - FINANCE & CONSULTANT

- DISBURSEMENT & CASH CONTROL
- BANKING & PAYMENTS
- PROJECT ACCOUNTING
- BUDGETING & FINANCIAL REPORTS
- COMPUTER

DIRECTOR-PROJECT FORMULATION & DONOR LIAISON

- PROJECT FORMULATION
- PROJECT MONITORING & EVALUATION
- REPORTING ON PROJECTS
- DONOR LIAISON

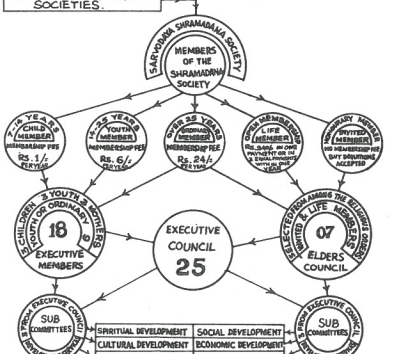
DIRECTOR - FIELD OPERATIONS

- LIFE LINE
- PROJECTS
- DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION
- PLANTATION WORKERS DEVELOPMENT SERVICES
- SAVINGS & CREDIT
- LEGAL - AID
- SHANTHI SENA
- SARVODAYA SHRAMADANA SOCIETIES
- CHILDRENS SERVICES
- INTERNATIONAL SERVICES
- PATHAKADA BHIKKU TRAINING INSTITUTE
- RURAL TECHNICAL SERVICES
- TANAMALWILA DEVELOPMENT EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE
- MALARIA RESEARCH PROGRAMME
- AUDIO - VISUAL
- WOMEN'S WELFARE
- SPECIAL SERVICE CENTRES

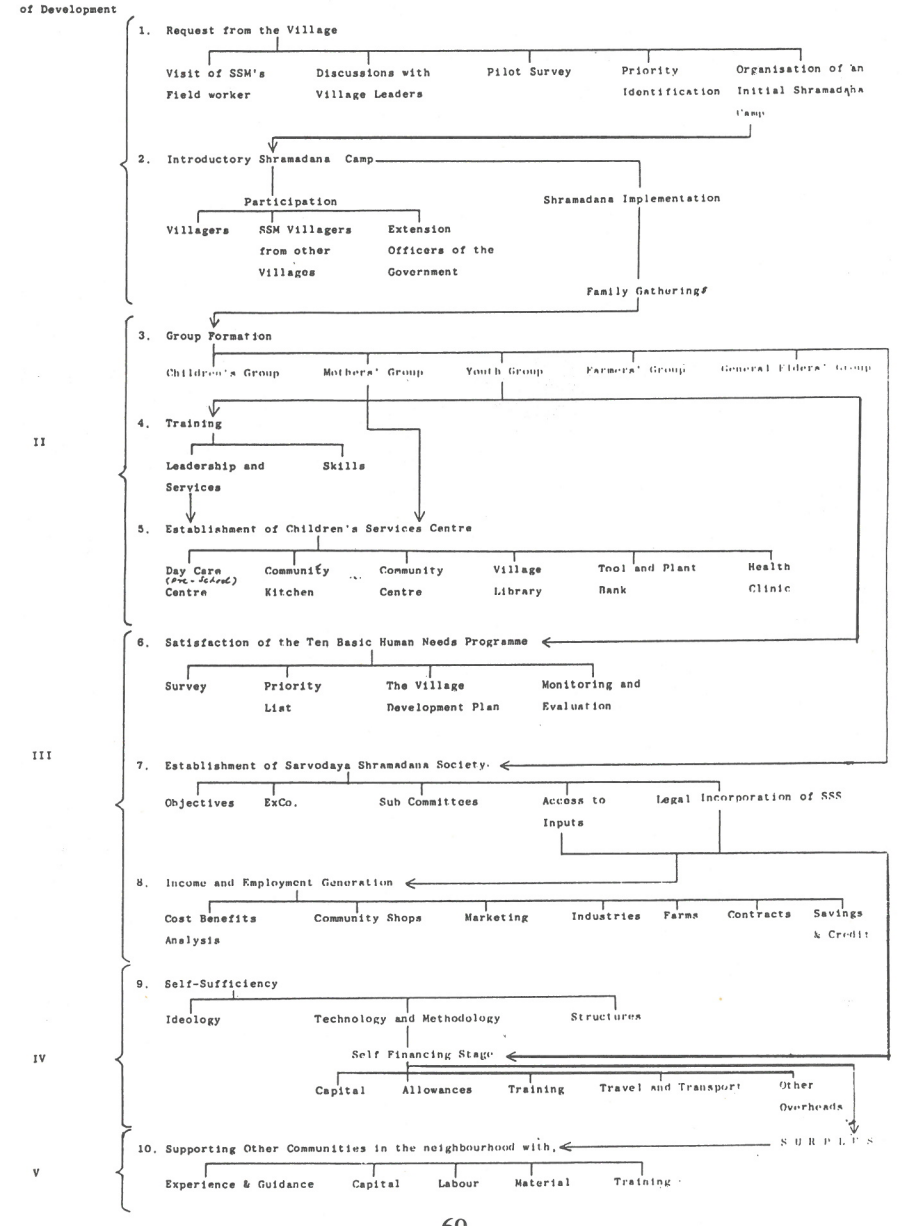
- FIELD DIRECTORS
- DISTRICT COORDINATORS
- DIVISIONAL COORDINATORS
- GRAMADANA WORKERS
- SARVODAYA SHRAMADANA SOCIETIES.

DIRECTOR-PLANNING MONITORING & EVALUATION

- PLANNING
- MONITORING & EVALUATION
- REPORTING


SARVODAYA SHRAMADANA SOCIETY
MEMBERS OF THE SHRAMADANA SOCIETY
7-14 YEARS CHILD MEMBER MEMBERSHIP FEE Rs. 1/- PER YR
15-29 YEARS YOUTH MEMBER MEMBERSHIP FEE Rs. 6/- PER YR
30-59 YEARS ORDINARY MEMBER MEMBERSHIP FEE Rs. 24/- PER YR
LIFE MEMBER Rs. 240/- IN ONE PAYMENT OR IN 5 EQUAL INSTALMENTS OF Rs. 48/- EACH
HONORARY MEMBER HONORARY MEMBERS NO MEMBERSHIP FEE PAY DONATIONS ACCEPTED
CHILDREN & YOUTH SECTION
18 EXECUTIVE MEMBERS
EXECUTIVE COUNCIL 25
ELECTED FROM AMONG THE ELDERS & LIFE MEMBERS
07 ELDERS COUNCIL
SUB COMMITTEES
SUB COMMITTEES
SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT
CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT
MORAL DEVELOPMENT
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT

SARVODAYA'S PACKAGE FOR PARTICIPATION AND SELF-RELIANCE



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Landlessness in Sri Lanka

CONTEXT

Landlessness in Sri Lanka in its modern context can be regarded as a relative phenomenon, because it had never been a serious problem in society before the advent of the British Colonial Rulers nearly two centuries ago. Today, the irony of the situation is that this has developed to be one of the most serious of our problems which inhibit the increase of food production for self sufficiency and the upgrading of the quality of rural life, though the potential for it is very high in a context of generally favourable climatic and soil conditions and the available extent of cultivable lands. For more than twenty centuries the principles of land use followed by the society were well in line with its ecology, structural requirements and population growth. This agrarian society with food production as its priority maintained the balance of the above forces as an integral part of its way of life, value system and the thought pattern. Conflict of interests of the colonial rulers shattered this well balanced system of land use and drove the community away from its land, because the interest of the new rulers was to establish an export oriented plantation industry.

A brief explanation of this process which rendered the Sri Lankan peasant landless would be useful to grasp the realities of today.

Sri Lanka maintained her 'Hydraulic Civilization', (as it was called by H. G. Wells), for twenty centuries in her dry zone which covers two thirds of her land area. It is called dry only in comparison with the wet zone, located in the South-west part of the country which receives an annual rainfall of well over 120 inches spread throughout the year. Even the so-called dry zone which receives an annual rainfall of 75 inches can by no means be regarded as a dry zone compared with dry areas in other parts of the world.

However, the rainfall in this zone is highly seasonal and confined to four months of the year. Still, the early settlers of the island who considered these conditions as more suitable for paddy cultivation which requires a dry season as well, built a

complex network of reservoirs and channels, on which the total economy was eventually based. Frequent onslaughts on this irrigational system by South Indian invaders in the eleventh century, and the resultant outbreak of malaria, pushed people towards the geographically safe wet zone. Though the conditions in this part of the country were not ideal for paddy cultivation, yet the population concentrated here to escape malaria. The shift of settlements however made no change in the life style of the community and the economy was soon made self-sufficient.

One of the most distinctive features of the political economy of the country before colonial rule was the concept of contract that existed between the ruler and the ruled. Though the king was regarded as the lord of the land, he nevertheless held it in trust. Though the succession to the throne was hereditary in practice, on principle, it was still subjected to popular approval which was conveyed to the ruler through chiefs. The king held the land in trust for the great service he rendered to the community by protecting the people from both internal and external threats. The people in turn, owed a service to the king for the land they obtained from him. The chiefs who exercised power delegated by the king also held land from the king and acted as the intermediaries between the people and the king. The relationship between the people and the chief was a patron-client relationship and if people were not satisfied with the behaviour of the latter there was every possibility for them to leave the land and relieve themselves from the services due to the chief. Contemporary records reveal that this patron-client relationship was very strong all over the country and that it also was evident in extreme form in some parts of the island at certain times. The result of this situation was the prevention both of the accumulation of wealth, and of the growth of status groups and power-holders at village level. Chiefs delegated their power to minor officers who in turn discharged their duties. However, the people enjoyed the privilege of requesting the removal of these officers if they were dissatisfied with them. The chief was usually obliged to execute the peoples' wish. The result of all this was that the political power groups, pressure groups and status groups all centred only around the court and

royalty, leaving the peasants at village level more or less equal in power, wealth and opportunity.

The land tenure system in Sri Lankan villages rested on a share basis and an examination of this system is vital to any understanding of the process of production in a village. The Sinhala word 'gama' which is generally rendered 'village' in the context of agriculture and land tenure, means a single estate or a single field which contained various shares. A share denotes a section of the total field. A share, however, did not indicate a specific geographical area in a field or estate. This can be understood better by examining how a new village or a field came to be established. A new estate was established when the shares in an old field or an estate were divided up to an optimum limit with the population growth. The traditional method of resolving such a problem was to shift some members of the estate by establishing a new estate. Traditionally, as an incentive to agricultural production, the virgin land thus brought under cultivation was exempt from tax or any service due to the king during its first generation.

A typical Sri Lankan village thus established had four different land areas. First, were the paddy (rice) fields which was the centre of village agricultural activity. Second, were the gardens or homesteads (highland) where the peasant residences were located and around which fruit trees and other permanent crops were grown. Thirdly, there was an area reserved for shift cultivation which was locally known as 'chena' cultivation. This area was about ten times that which was set apart for paddy cultivation. The reason for this extensive land area being reserved for chena cultivation was the requirement that a land should lie fallow for a period once in between seven to fifteen years (depending on its soil composition) to recuperate its fertility before cultivation could be repeated. Finally, a certain area of the jungle was reserved as a necessary adjunct to the newly established village. This area furnished the village with its fuel requirements and was also the common pasture for the village cattle.

Once a new village was established, during its first generation itself the paddy fields of the newly cultivated area were divided

into shares, and cultivated in a system known as 'alternation' which is a rotation of shares in the field, so that, in the long run, everyone in the group gets an equal chance of cultivating both more fertile and less fertile areas of the field. The system was based on the egalitarian principle of equality of right of all the members holding shares in the village.

Until the middle of the 19th century, Sri Lankan peasants had sufficient land to pursue whatever form of cultivation they cared to engage in. It is true that some peasants lost traditional rights over the land holdings which traditionally belonged to them, and turned them over to share-croppers. Moreover, some peasants had to switch over to cultivation for the market needs instead of cultivating for consumption. But the fact remains that the peasant was never denied access to land in any part of the island, and had a choice depending upon his ability and place of residence to be engaged in some form of cultivation.

The Creation of a Landless Peasantry

The introduction of European owned plantation industry brought to a close this unrestricted access to the land, which the peasantry had enjoyed as a birthright throughout centuries under their traditional government. The Crown Lands Encroachment Ordinance of 1840 deprived the peasantry of their chena lands which had been their undisputed property under the traditional system of ownership. All forests, waste, unoccupied and uncultivated land were declared the property of the Crown unless the opposite was proved.

The Ordinance put an end to the traditional expansion of the villages as and when population growth made it necessary. The traditional village, which consisted of four areas was now confined only to two, the paddy fields area and the residential area, the latter too, being much smaller in extent that what was customary. Some scholars who have studied this subject point out that villages generally had contracted in size from about 700 acres to about 100 acres, as a result of losing land to the Crown.

Moreover, instances were not uncommon where entire villages were shifted to make room for plantations.

A number of other subsequent ordinances weakened the position of the peasant further. The effects of these ordinances on peasant production were serious and manifold. First, the acquisition and sale of the chena and forest reserves left them with no quarters for further expansion. It was seen that the traditional system worked to maintain the land/labour ratio in equilibrium at the best level of production. However the elimination of chena lands and forest reserves threw the whole system out of balance, and to accommodate the growing population the peasants adopted the only alternative available to them which was the application of intensive labour on the available paddy lands. Yet, the system of shares and the system of alternation, the basic elements of traditional cultivation could not be maintained for a long time in the absence of fresh land to absorb the excess labour which would be thrown out by the villages as a necessary move to maintain the land/labour equilibrium. Once this pre-requisite of fresh land was removed the whole system lost its balance. The fragmentation of land into minute units continued beyond limits whereby the cultivation of small shares became practically impossible, and also not economically feasible. Excess labour became a problem in many peasant villages.

Another consequence of the spread of commercial plantations was the neglect of the irrigational system in the wet zone. Deforestation of the wet zone too had disastrous effects on paddy cultivation. The deforestation affected the peasants' production in various ways. Monsoon, and equatorial torrential rains normal to the region washed away the fertile top soil, now unprotected by its natural forest cover, rendering the land barren. The deforestation also affected the climatalogy of the island. Alternating droughts and floods became frequent phenomena in the wet zone, starting from this time. Added to this was the incidence of earthslips which often destroyed property and lives. The spread of plantations eliminated pastures, which were the main source of fodder for the cattle that were extensively used in paddy cultivation.

Elimination of pastures together with various other reasons related to the expansion of plantations, seriously restricted the availability of cattle. This in turn resulted in the need for use of more human labour to maintain even the earlier level of production.

Importation of cheap South Indian labour made the situation even worse. Though there was no incentive at the early stages of the plantation industry for the self-reliant Sri Lankan peasant to work in the plantations, with the passage of time the problem took a different turn. Though the peasant population rose sharply, the extent of land available for cultivation remained static. The consequence was mounting pressure for land, the extreme fragmentation of ownership of the land and endless litigation on property which was not known before, all of which chased many a peasant family out of their hereditary allotment.

Even in the mid-19th century the peasants were still left with a plot of land, however small, which they could cultivate for a living, though its meagre returns due to the smallness of the plot were no longer sufficient to maintain their family units. Yet, the government soon passed a few ordinances, which resulted in turning about one third of the peasantry into a new class of landless peasants. Two particular ordinances which introduced a grain tax threw them into serious debt, worsened by frequent crop failures. The disastrous result was the seizure of their small plots of land to be sold either by the private creditors who constituted a new class emerging during this period, or by the government. The emergence of a new power group consisting of newly appointed headmen whose function was to collect tax on a commission basis, and of private creditors, further accelerated this process of throwing the peasants out of their land.

The result was a widening inequality of status among the residents within a village. The traditional village was composed of a kin group of more or less equal status in economic and soil ownership terms. The village headmen, newly created by the British, together with the trader cum creditor who emerged as a result of the newly introduced capitalist economy, started

playing a leading role in village politics. The importance of village elders and the village council dwindled simultaneously. By the middle of the century the headmen and their relatives had become a distinct power group with their base on the land grabbed from the peasantry. Thus in every village there emerged a few families who were not engaged in agricultural labour. They commanded the attendance of a number of peasants who were obliged to attend on them by virtue of their being tenants on their land, cultivated by them on a share cropping basis. With the passage of time, in such a situation where the extent of cultivable land remained unchanged, every population increase drove more peasants out of their land, forcing them to be share-croppers and eventuallv end up as agri-labourers.

Present Situation

Though the land area as well as the population of the island are relatively small (a population of 15.24 million as of 1982 in 25,333 square miles) around 55 percent of this consists of a peasant population predominantly formed by the small holders and the landless.

The peasantry in Sri Lanka can be generally classified as 1. Paddy land operators 2. Home gardeners and 3. Chena cultivators. The extent of land Home gardeners own varies between a quarter of an acre to five acres of holdings, with minor crops such as cloves, cinnamon, betel etc. and minor food and vegetable crops. Chena cultivation is a vague mixture of paddy, home garden and other operations. However, a classification of this nature is most difficult due to the fact that the peasantry in Sri Lanka is generally engaged, in varying degrees, in more than one activity for their livelihood. This diversified peasantry is commonly faced with the unpleasant situation of marginalization leading to landlessness. This situation has arisen from the fact that more and more farmers are beginning to own and work in less and less land which results in a deteriorating man/land relationship. This deterioration is manifest in the small holder's denigration to micro holder, to home gardener, to

share cropper down to homesteader and eventually landless agricultural labourer. According to the Socio-Economic Indicators of Sri Lanka in 1983, 30 per cent of the rural pupulation belongs to the landless labourer category. Their membership is certainly on the increase; their incomes are the lowest and most irregular and living conditions the poorest in rural areas. The vast majority (43 per cent) of the agricultural operators in Sri Lanka are small holders or micro operators working on less than one acre in extent. Their number has increased by almost 50 per cent in the last few years.

25 to 30 per cent of paddy land is operated by sharecroppers who still pay more than 50 per cent of crop share to the land owners. They also have to pay high interest rates on inputs and have no secure possession of land. Encroachment on government land in the dry zone has been one of the results of deteriorating man-land relationship in the wet zone of Sri Lanka. These chena cultivators and encroachers, who are entirely dependent on highly seasonal and unpredictable rainfall, are faced with a different category of problems. Among the former, there are clear signs of increasing numbers of poor households, deprived of access to land to practise chena cultivation. This is due to increased competition for land and the growing depletion of forests. Among the latter, the vast majority are genuine land seekers, mainly from over-crowded wet zone areas, who were engaged in rainfed highland cultivation. They generally lack security of land and have remained outside the purview of state development programmes.

Sri Lanka's marginalized peasantry, more than any other sector, is in dire need of state attention and assistance in terms of legal protection and recognition, subsidies, credit, minimum wages, homestead security and employment guarantee.

Government Action

The government of Sri Lanka has made various attempts since 1935 to solve this problem and promote rural

development. Among them, one of the most significant measures has been the Paddy Lands Act of 1958, which provided security of tenure for the tenants. Between 1958 and 1970, a total of five amending legislations were passed, all geared towards preventing the illegal eviction of tenants.

Promotion of land reform attempts took place in 1972 with the introduction of Land Reform Law imposing a ceiling on individual land ownership of 25 acres of paddy land and 50 acres of land under other crops. Note-worthy is the fact that, according to the Central Bank of Ceylon Studies, no specific provision has been made regarding the distribution of land among the tillers of the soil, be they tenants or labourers on vested land. For this reason the Land Reform Law has failed to make an impact on landless agricultural labourers. The higher ceiling on paddy, which is 25 acres, gave the Land Reform Commission only 18,000 acres. This was not more than 2 per cent of the total paddy land. Moreover, not even 10 per cent of the land vested in the Land Reform Commission was given over to the landless peasants. If ever they were given, they were mostly for residential purposes rather than for agricultural development. Furthermore, no legislative provision has been made to prevent further fragmentation of small holdings.

Since independence in 1948 more than 100,000 families have been settled in several major irrigational schemes. Around 60,000 allottees have also been settled under village expansion in the dry zone areas, and in the more crowded wet zone some 55,000 allottees have been settled. These programmes which are still being pursued no doubt benefited substantial numbers of the landless. The Mahaweli, the major river diversion scheme, and other major programmes will further benefit some 140,000 families in the years to come. However, the feasible rate of expansion in irrigated colonization schemes will only have a marginal impact on the problem of landlessness. Landlessness, in fact, is emerging as a new problem even in old colonization schemes.

Recently a project undertaken by Sarvodaya at the request of a donor organization found the original number of some

400 families in the project area had increased to 1200 families within the space of nearly 30 years, with no possibility of expanding the cultivable land. As long as the traditional system of division of land equally among the children of the family continues to remain, and where there is no possibility of expansion of villages as existed in the past, and there is an increasing rate of population growth landlessness will be an extremely difficult problem to solve.

Green Revolution and Landlessness

The Green Revolution, which was introduced to the Sri Lankan peasantry in the early sixties, with the aim of increasing food production, has shown positive results in terms of increase of food production, resulting in the reduction of food imports. However, various studies made on the impact of the Green Revolution have revealed that though food production has increased the price the peasantry had to pay for that has been equally high. Studies made on rural indebtedness in Sri Lanka show that the percentage of Sri Lankan peasants who were living in a vicious cycle of indebtedness before the sixties was less than 40 per cent. The introduction of new hybrid varieties, which became extremely popular with the years, needed fertilizer, various chemicals as well as tractorization, all of which required a substantial amount of capital. The majority of the peasantry, which was already living on or below the poverty line, had neither the experience with institutionalized credit facilities nor the collateral required by the banks, and consequently they had to borrow money from the creditor, middleman and shopkeeper who dominated the rural economy. Credit was issued on mortgage of their land and crops and with a few unsuccessful crops, they lost their land to the middlemen. At present, the percentage of peasants who are badly in debt is nearly 80 per cent.

Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement and Landless Peasantry

Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement (SSM) which in the late fifties originated as an educational experiment for students, soon realized the fact, through experience, that no

development of the personality of the individual, the family or the community was possible unless an integrated approach of development was adopted. Though SSM has a welfare approach at its entry point, mainly in order to motivate and mobilise communities for their own development, SSM soon realized that the Sri Lankan economy was based on its peasantry, and as long as their problems remain unresolved whatever development achieved was not very meaningful.

However, the SSM being a voluntary organization has to function within its limitations. SSM is aware that the issue of landlessness cannot be solved unless a structural change, in terms of effective land reform, is made.

Still, the SSM has introduced various programmes and projects at village, regional and national levels to address various inter-related economic, institutional and legal problems of the peasantry, which if unchecked would eventually throw them off their land. As such, within SSM's limitations, what it could execute in the present context is to take preventive measures rather than to initiate reform. SSM also believes that Development Education which the community will gain through experience with the SSM, would in the long run organize them for such demands for structural change.

SSM's general programme, initiated with a welfare approach consisting of basic needs satisfaction activities, is aimed at institutionalizing the peasantry to win their rights. The peasantry in Sri Lanka, especially the landless and the share croppers can be regarded as the most disorganized of the work force of the country. Formation of peasant groups, integrated with other groups in the village, leads to specific activities aimed at solving peasant problems such as indebtedness, low productivity, lack of technical assistance, and inputs etc. The Sarvodaya Shramadana Society (SSS) formed in the village at a later stage enables the peasants to gain legal status. Legal recognition leads to access to resources which they badly need.

The institutionalization process is released simultaneously with training and legal aid. Training in leadership and

conservation agriculture and bio-dynamic agriculture create skills which peasants need, to maximise productivity with available resources. Legal aid programmes organized by the SSM are aimed at legal education, conciliation and litigation. SSMs panels of voluntary attorneys from each district have been effective in resolving many a legal problem in favour of the peasants.

Economic activities introduced through peasant groups such as Savings and Credit Programmes, Processing Industries, Storage Service and Marketing Networks at all levels have effectively brought peasants together and formed a competitive organization at village level. SSM does not attempt to eliminate the middleman, but it strongly believes that a highly competitive and alternative network of the peasants could be built, and thereby the threat of increasing landlessness could be averted.

(From a speech delivered by Dr. A. T. Ariyaratne, President of the Sarvodaya Movement, at the Expert Consultation on Landlessness in Rural Asia held in Hanoi, Vietnam from 7th to 9th February 1987.)

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5.

Peace Making in Sri Lanka in the Buddhist Context

PEACE MAKING IN SRI LANKA IN THE BUDDHIST CONTEXT

As a Sri Lankan, it gives me pain of mind to speak on the subject of peace making in Sri Lanka. It is more painful when this subject has to be discussed in the Buddhist context. When Sri Lanka was Buddhist, both in precept and practice, there was no need to talk about peace making because there was no fundamental value crisis in the Sri Lankan society in spite of internally or externally caused strifes and power struggles, which sometimes led to bloody rebellions and wars. Peace prevailed in the minds of the general public and their communities because the generally accepted value system remained unattacked by contending groups.

It is common knowledge that there is a disturbed situation in Sri Lanka today where legalised structural violence prevails and extra legal violent methods are used as well to resolve conflicts. Some call it an 'ethnic problem'. Some others call it a 'terrorist problem'. Yet others call it a 'militant struggle for liberation'. There are still other groups trying to identify it with a more simplistic description, calling it a kind of war between the Sinhala Buddhist majority and Tamil Hindu minority. Whatever it is, there is violence and counter-violence which has already taken a toll of several thousand lives, most of them innocent and powerless people who could not comprehend what was going on around them.

There are various kinds of scholarly papers written on this issue. Some of them trace the problem back to the Aryan Dravidian origins of the Sinhala and Tamil races. Others have taken great pains to prove who inhabited the Island first. Human Rights have been discussed in great detail. Dialogues and negotiations have been going on for several years with militant groups at the level of political parties and governments. There is hardly anything useful that can be achieved by adding to those writings and peace formulae - additions may even create more confusion in the minds of the people. In spite of all this, not only the people who have taken up arms - those with declared

legitimacy on the part of the government and extra-legally on the part of the militants - but large numbers of innocent men, women and children get killed, become disabled for life, lose their houses and property, become destitute and suffer untold agony.

What is most needed seems to be not highly academic peace plans, full of minute legal details but a down to earth approach within the reach of ordinary citizens of the country. As a non-academic, I agreed to speak on this subject because it is in such a layman's exercise that I am involved, with others, through the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement, at the moment. Most people feel that Sarvodaya is 'Buddhist thinking' in development action. Similarly, the Sarvodaya efforts at peace making in Sri Lanka can be described as Peace Making in Sri Lanka in the Buddhist context. As I am qualified to talk only about what I am involved in, I will confine myself to Sarvodaya efforts in peace making.

Before I proceed any further, I would like to make certain preliminary remarks about Buddhism in Sri Lanka. Statistically 70% of the people in Sri Lanka are said to profess Buddhism. There is hardly any place in the country where an ancient or modern Buddhist monument or monastery is not found. There are around 20,000 monks attending to the religious needs of people today. Religious ceremonies and related activities are going on continuously. The teachings of the Buddha in its most pristine form is found in Dhamma texts. Even non-Buddhist laymen and politicians liberally quote chapter and verse from the Buddha's Words in their public utterances. When one sees and hears all this, one gets the impression, or I would say, the illusion that Sri Lanka is a Buddhist country.

To my mind to call Sri Lanka a Buddhist country and then put the blame on every kind of immoral act or incident of violence or denial of human rights on Buddhists is not fair. Even though historically and culturally Sri Lanka may claim to be Buddhist, in my opinion, certainly the way political and economic structures are instituted and managed today, they can hardly be called Buddhist either in precept or in practice.

Let me have a look at the political structure. It is based on the so-called party system which has been adopted from the West. Political parties **in practice** promote, what is called in Buddhism the Four Defilements, namely, Chanda, Dvēsha, Bhaya and Mōha. By Chanda we mean bringing about an alienation from one another in the minds of the people. The existing caste, linguistic, racial, communal or other differences are surreptitiously and sometimes openly used by political parties to promote their own self interest, instead of promoting compassion and the idea of well-being of all in the minds of people. Therefore, the political parties hold a notorious record for promoting alienation among the people in Sri Lanka.

Dvesha is illwill, which is the direct result of the aforementioned alienation. Organised gossip, rumour, falsehood and so on supplement various kinds of apparently democratic, political and economic propaganda, carried out by most of the leaders of political parties. While the political elite may have a common understanding of the game they play according to their own rules, the unwary ordinary people fall a prey to their machinations and develop long-standing enmities and irreconciliable conflicts. This is the beginning of a lot of violent confrontations we witness today in Sri Lanka.

The third characteristic, Bhaya is mutual fear. In post-independent Sri Lanka while an unjust, unhealthy and a borrowed party political system was kept going for the benefit of a small class of people, to whatever party they belonged to, mutual suspicion and fear among common people also kept gathering momentum increasingly. The so-called 1983 communal violence, was promoted by a handful of politically powerful people who were in a microscopic minority, yet they were able to rouse this spirit of mutual fear that prevailed among most people and keep them away from any constructive intervention to prevent the escalation of that violence.

Of course there was a negative kind of intervention on the part of some educated people, interventions in the form of scholarly analyses based on a hoard of statistical data

and historical facts. I call this mostly negative interventions because they did not in any way affect the thinking of either the man on the street or our basic political and economic structure that promoted a situation of disharmony and conflict. In other words, without touching the basic roots of mental defilements and social realities resulting from them, any other kind of philosophising, in Buddhist terminology, is simply called 'Mōha' or ignorance. When ignorance becomes organised, and one calls it social science, it is a disaster for communities who have a right to expect more positive interventions from the more educated sectors. We see a situation today in Sri Lanka of different groups holding on to their own uncompromising positions while the sound of guns and explosions are continuing to be heard.

The economic goals, structures and processes that are officially promoted also are not, in my opinion, conducive to building peace in a Buddhist way. Promoting consumerism is one extreme which Lord Buddha rejected as Kamasukhallikanuyoga. Since independence the country has been drawing away from the Middle Path. 450 years of Western influence and rule, the deliberate promotion of the materialistic way of life and the existence of a small elite group who have achieved that affluent level, had made the general population also aspire to achieve material prosperity as their sole aim in life. But few do succeed. Most end up in a situation worse than they were in before. With the introduction of the so-called free economy during the last ten years and plenty of imported consumer goods floating around, everyone is bent on making quick money to acquire these non-essentials. Malnutrition is on the increase, crime is on the increase, the cost of living is skyrocketing, bribery and corruption have taken unprecedented proportions.

When any kind of social unrest sets in, there are small gangs of indisciplined people who take advantage of the situation. These are mostly teenagers who have had no proper schooling or education in cultural values. But the media have conditioned their minds to aspire for various material things. They go on a rampage of looting and arson at the slightest opportunity they get. This is what happened

in 1983 July in many places in Sri Lanka. Some young people looted television sets from shops, and only after taking them home to their shanty dwellings realised that they had neither electricity nor a place to keep them in. Then they smashed them on the ground. This kind of psychological reaction is a clear example of the frustrations developed in people who see a consumerist society around them, but are denied the opportunities to get to it.

So the economic environment is not conducive to bring about mental peace and contentment when an unhealthy economy thus supported by a vicious power-oriented political system, brings about a lack of peace in individuals and communities. In a Buddhist society, neither political nor economic activities promoted by the State should be contradictory to the Teachings of the Buddha. In both these fields of human activities, there are teachings that can guide a State dedicated to follow the Teachings of the Buddha. A Buddhist primarily has to abstain from killing, stealing, adultery, lying and consuming intoxicants. When all these five abstentions are formally promoted directly or indirectly by the State, it is not far from building a Buddhist economy. When speaking of economic development, Lord Buddha not only stressed the importance of increased efficiency in production (Uttāna Sampadā), but also simultaneously stressed the importance of protecting the resources and the environment (Arakkha Sampadā), the friendly social milieu in which economic activities should take place (Kalyāna Mittatā) and the style of life for which all the economic activities are directed (Sama Jeevakatā).

Production and consumption are not the totality of life and society. They are the material foundation on which higher objectives pertaining to human life and culture have to be attained. According to the way production, distribution, consumption, technologies, marketing and structures are developed, the achievement of these higher objectives can be promoted or seriously hampered. This is what is happening to the economy in Sri Lanka. The lack of a spiritual balance is resulting in widespread ecological and environmental problems which also affect the thinking and conduct of human beings.

The Sarvodaya approach in peace making is two-fold. Firstly, the Movement tries to re-establish a value system, the technologies and structures that would release processes leading to a more sustainable society. Secondly, the Movement addresses itself to the problems that need immediate attention even though their origin is in the present arrangement of the political, economic and social structure of our society.

The latter programme is something like bringing relief, rehabilitation and reconciliation to people who have been affected by violence. The former is an attempt to remove the causes that have brought about the present state of unrest.

Having outlined the political and economic processes which are promoted officially with all the State power, one can understand how difficult it is to promote an alternative and a parallel series of processes within the law, leading to a social order which manifests Buddhist values and objectives. In this case-study on Peace Making in Sri Lanka in the Buddhist context, taking the experience of the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement, what I am attempting to do is to describe how it has been implemented during the last three decades. Firstly, I will give a brief description of the overall approach we are making to bring about a change in the system and secondly, follow it up with actions taken by us, specially to redress the damage already done by various eruptions of violence caused by economic, political and social factors.

Sarvodaya is a Buddhist concept. It literally means the 'Awakening of All'. Shramadana means, 'Sharing of one's time, thought and effort'. Sarvodaya thought and Shramadana action form the foundation on which the Movement was started.

Buddha's admonition that human beings desirous of putting an end to the painful cycle of births and deaths should try to realise the illusion of 'ego' and try to transcend selfishness, is the essence of the Sarvodaya thought. In practice, this amounts to selfless service towards fellow beings irrespective of their caste, class, creed, race and other divisive considerations.

That which is easiest to part with or share with others is one's thoughts and efforts. So, the Sarvodaya activities begin with Shramadana camps where men, women and children in communities share their labour to satisfy various needs of communities.

In Buddhist Philosophy, four principles of social conduct, namely, Dāna (sharing), Priya Vacana (constructive speech), Arthaċharyā (constructive activity) and Samānāthmathā (equality) are advocated. In a Shramadana Camp, these four principles are always kept before the participants and practised. More than the physical achievement in a camp the psycho-social benefits derived are important in the context of peace making. The participants in these camps come from different social political backgrounds but when they go through the Shramadana camp experience they generally leave with an experience which helps them to transcend all barriers and feel one with humanity.

Today, there are over 8000 villages out of a total of over 23,000 villages in Sri Lanka where this kind of experience is shared by thousands of people attending regular Shramadana camps. In 1986, 3910 Shramadana Camps were held, totalling 314,412 man-days of work. We call this psychological infrastructure building. Building peace at a national level is inconceivable without all the people in the country coming together at a psychological level.

I should even venture to call such a process as spiritual infrastructure building. In a Buddhist society, Loving, Kindness, Compassion and Respect for Life are given the highest priority. Our parents would not allow us as children to harass or harm or kill even a small living insect like a mosquito. In the Karaniya Metta Sutta, the Buddha taught us the importance of extending loving kindness towards all beings. The people in a cultural milieu which has respect for life as an accepted principle, irradiate from their minds a kind of friendly mental energy. In such a spiritual climate, the language spoken to one another becomes pleasant and inter-personal relationships taking place among individuals become constructive, affectionate, selfless and non-violent.

As I mentioned before, unfortunately in modern society this kind of spiritual relationship is suppressed by economic and political competitiveness. This kind of competitiveness is systematized and organised under various eye-catching, tantalizing slogans. Therefore, building the psycho-social and spiritual infrastructure also has to be systematized and organised. Otherwise it is not possible to counteract the purely materialistic forces.

Perhaps, it will be appropriate here to mention briefly the technique of community meditation that the members of the Sarvodaya Movement practise. It has five steps. Firstly, the relaxation of the body with the mind; secondly, keep the mind at the tip of the nostrils observing the breathing in and out; thirdly, expressing loving kindness towards one's body and mind and progressively extending it towards the near and dear ones and all others including the ones who are disliked; fourthly, attempting to link up with other human beings and those who live in other planes of existence who practise similar forms of universal loving kindness; fifthly, directing all the thought energies towards a form of conscious willingness for justice and world peace.

The rationale behind the first step is for the individual to be conscious that his mind and body always function together. The second step helps one to conserve mental energy by keeping away other thoughts from coming. The third step multiplies these conserved thought energies manifold and during the fourth step it is universalised. In the fifth step, this universal energy is collectively irradiated towards all living beings and specifically towards the peace and well being of the human family.

While an unseen spiritual infrastructure is systematically laid in this manner, it is also necessary to organise people of all age groups as social formations. This is done in Sri Lankan villages by the Sarvodaya Movement by helping village communities to get organised as children's, mothers', youths', farmers' and other formations. Leaders for all these groups are trained in Sarvodaya institutions so that they learn the art and science of satisfying their material and spiritual needs.

The satisfaction of one's needs should be clearly differentiated from the gratification of one's greed. Needs can be satisfied but greed is insatiable. Therefore, in a Buddhist society, it is essential that a sustainable and simple life style is encouraged and held in high social esteem. Without resorting to a wrong livelihood, such a life style can be maintained with locally available resources in most instances. Self-reliance and community participation can play a very vital role in economic activities aimed at achieving such need -oriented objectives. In a society geared to such economic activities, a clean and beautiful environment and an ecological balance can be maintained. A clean and adequate supply of water, clothing requirements, simple housing, primary health care, energy needs, communication facilities and so on, can easily be satisfied.

Education of the personality related to the satisfaction of these needs can be made a reality in all group activities. Spiritual and cultural needs of different groups can also be satisfied, leading to the strengthening of unity and harmony among all people. The Sarvodaya Movement has succeeded in breaking social and political barriers bringing the temple, kovil, mosque and the church together making all of them centres for the promotion of common spiritual values, so that unity in diversity becomes a living reality. Therefore, rather than sermonizing and philosophizing and without abstract metaphysics, a living reality and the collective joy of living could be experienced in the Sarvodaya approaches. Perhaps the steadfastness with which most Sinhalese, Tamil and Muslim communities stand together peacefully in most parts of the country in spite of irresponsible rabble rousing by the media and the demagogues, is due to the silent work done by these simple grassroots communities influenced by the Sarvodaya thought and action.

The organisational infrastructure building or networking of these communities, laterally as well as vertically, has also to be achieved. As many as 65 different specialized services such as nutrition, healthcare, village technologies, control of communicable diseases, protection and enhancement of the environment, evolution of decision making process,

economic enterprises including production, marketing and distribution and so on have been developed in a manner conducive to building friendship and co-operation rather than rivalries and competitions among the aforementioned groups. This sort of integrated approach contributes very much to release processes conducive to general peace in society or removing the causes that promote disharmony and violence.

Now let me come to the contribution Sarvodaya has made specifically to contain and repair the damage, following the Buddhist principles, whatever the causes may have been.

Towards the latter part of the 1950s and subsequently on several occasions upto 1983, whenever communal violence erupted in a localised way or generally, the Sarvodaya workers depending on their numbers, distribution and strength at those times, came forward fearlessly and organised relief, rehabilitation and reconciliation programmes. The worst ever violent incident occurred in July 1983.

Within 24 hours, Sarvodaya went into action facing all the risks involved in a general atmosphere of insanity. There were neither official nor voluntary leaders nor organisations who had the courage to stand up to condemn violence publicly and call for sanity during the critical days that followed except the leadership of the Sarvodaya Movement. It was with their open commitment amidst threats from extremists that they opened the first refugee camps for affected Tamils, encouraged and supported government ministries to come out and help the victims and even toured the whole country including the North and the East to render relief and appeal for sanity so that further escalation of violence could be prevented. This commitment and sacrifice could never have been possible if not for the total integrated approach that the Movement was building during the preceding two and a half decades.

The two months that followed the July 1983 violence was a tense period and even the best of friends among Sinhalese and Tamils abstained from mixing together openly. But Sarvodaya workers in all parts of the country openly went

about their work together without any racial differences and contributed in an immeasurable manner to allay the mutual fears. In August itself the first public meeting to be covered by the media on the communal violence was held at the Sarvodaya headquarters. This was followed by a historic Conference held on the 1st and 2nd of October 1983, at the Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall in Colombo, attended by nearly 2000 civic leaders of all races, including dignitaries of all religions including the Mahanayakes of all Buddhist Sects. A historic document named 'A People's Declaration for Mutual Peace and Harmony' was discussed and adopted unanimously by all those present by being signatories to the same.

This twenty page Declaration was the first public document that highlighted the symptoms of the General Degeneration in the Sri Lankan society, the Causes of this Degeneration and the way of Removing the Causes of this Degeneration with a Common Recommendation and Specific Recommendations for various groups for Action. This entire document was written following the Buddhist Principles and using the Buddha's approach to problems, namely, the Four Noble Truths. There is suffering (Dukkha). There is a Cause that brings about Suffering (Samudha). This Cause can be removed (Nirodha). And, there is a Path leading to the Removal of Suffering (Marga). It is significant that this Declaration was published in full in all leading Sinhala, Tamil and English newspapers and it was followed by action programmes several months before the local and expatriate Sri Lankan scholars started writing their voluminous theoretical treatises and the political parties started their All-Party deliberations.

The Symptoms of General Degeneration in the Sri Lankan society were highlighted in the Declaration as follows:

"While we accept the fact that the Stability, Peace and Progress of a Society rests on the degree of understanding, respect and adherence on the part of its members, to its Value System upon which the Spiritual, Moral, Cultural, Social, Economic and Political sectors of that society are based, and the honour paid and the adherence attached to it by the members, and that our Society showed a gradual

degeneration in all these sectors during the post World-War II era, and that, the resulting decadence reached its climax in July, erupting into criminal incidents with possible political and/or communal overtones of a very serious nature and having realised that these incidents have shattered the very foundation of our social fabric, revealing,

"Firstly, the existence of a number of groupings in our Society, numerically very small, but yet very powerful, who neither pay any heed to, nor observe, what we as cultured people have commonly upheld for thousands of years, as Good and Evil, Moral and Immoral, Right and Wrong, Just and Unjust, Fair and Foul, Human and Inhuman, and that,

Secondly, their solution to Political, Economic, Social or any other problem, is beyond the realms of the accepted Law of the Land, being conceived only through violence and thuggery, and that,

Thirdly, they pay not even the scantiest respect to life, human or other, and that,

Fourthly, they derive immense mental satisfaction (consciously or unconsciously) by destroying private and public property, and that,

Fifthly, in their midst, even religious leaders, the custodians of value Systems in our Society have become ineffective, and that,

Sixthly, some politicians and others, who wielding more of wealth, power and position, guided by narrow political and economic gains, shield and protect these lawless elements, ignoring the damage and destruction they cause to established norms, human lives and the nation as a whole, and that.

Seventhly, the efficiency and power of the Police to safeguard Law and Order in such a situation have been weakened, and that,

Eighthly, even the Law Courts and Prisons, administering and enforcing Law, have become unsafe, and that,

Ninthly, the discipline and morale of the Police and the Armed Forces to make their presence felt in the event of

a national calamity, whatever the cause may be, have deteriorated, and that,

Tenthly, respectful and law abiding citizens have feelings of doubt and fear to stand up and generate and provide People's Power essential for the protection of the Value System and the enforcement of Law and Order, in the event of these lawless elements taking over, disrespecting Value Systems and violating the State Law, and that,

Eleventhly, the Political Leaders, the strongest section in Modern Society, have failed to provide an undivided, united leadership to the people even during a serious national calamity, and that,

Twelfthly, as a result of all these, even foreign powers have begun to show undue concern in our internal problems, causing a threat to National sovereignty, we have come to be aware that an understanding of these symptoms of common degeneration evident in all communities living in our country, be they Sinhala, Tamil, Moor, Malay, Burgher or any other, is of utmost importance at this moment of crisis."

Similarly, the Causes of degeneration were analysed under the following headings:

1. Destruction of the Value System.
2. Discrepancy in the Educational System.
3. Loss of the Sense of Fear and Shame attached to the Violation of Law and Social Norms.
4. Weakening of Community Leadership.
5. Interference with State Services by External Forces.
6. Creation of a Wrong Life Style.

Next, it promulgated the following action programme as the way of removing the Causes of Degeneration:

1. Steps should be taken to give leadership to the Buddhist public to refashion their social, economic and political life on the spiritual, moral and cultural values as traditionally laid down under the leadership of the Maha Sangha.
2. A Buddhist-Hindu Brotherhood Promotion Programme should be launched on the initiatives of the Sinhala

Buddhist community, owing to the sole reason that it is the Tamil-Hindu population that has won world sympathy as victims of various crimes.

3. Leaders of all religions, as all religions are intrinsically messages of peace and brotherhood, should unite and exert themselves in the forefront in an attempt at inculcating a sense of respect for moral laws.
4. Special attention has to be focussed on Tamil and other communities living in majority Sinhala areas, in order to accept them and protect them in brotherhood, respecting and assisting to nurture their language and culture.
5. Special attention has to be focussed on Sinhala and other communities living in majority Tamil areas in order to accept them and protect them in brotherhood, respecting and assisting to nurture their language and culture.
6. Immediate investigations have to be made into violations or denials of Human Rights of any community in any part of the country, politically, socially, economically, culturally or administratively and those occurring due to the weakness of security services and to rectify them with the least delay in keeping with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations and the Fundamental Rights enshrined in the Constitution of Sri Lanka.
7. The present economic system and its processes have to be brought under review and an Economic Philosophy and process in keeping with the national requirements and values have to be thought out and implemented immediately.
8. The party and power oriented political system considered by most as the main cause of distrust, differences, sectarianism and other vicious obstacles operating in the present society should be replaced by an alternate democratic system of administration within the unitary frame of the State of Sri Lanka, capable of fostering mutual Confidence, Friendship, Brotherhood and Peace in which the common people can participate to a maximum.

This Declaration ended with a Common Recommendation and several Special Recommendations to be followed up by the Government, Parties and other People's Organisations.

Being convinced that people are fundamentally in favour of peace and justice and of reconciliation through mutual understanding, a Peace Walk was organised from the Southern most tip of the Island to the Northern extremity, passing through important towns – in order to evoke the deeper humaneness of the people and provide an opportunity for it to be expressed in an explicit and healing manner – as one of the recommendations included in the Declaration. However, it is pathetic that the Peace Walk had to be indefinitely postponed at the end of its third day. After the completion of inter-religious ceremonies the participants had proceeded for barely fifteen miles, when the march was called off, following an idea expressed personally by His Excellency, the President of Sri Lanka, who went down to meet the 10,000 strong band of participants of that historic 'Pilgrimage from one human heart to another human heart'. Yet, even though this long Peace Walk was postponed, the Sarvodaya activities in the fields of relief, rehabilitation and reconciliation at the level of village communities, continues to this day. In different parts of the country, specially in tense areas, limited Peace Walks ranging from 6 miles to 36 miles were made with the participation of people ranging in numbers from 2000 to 30,000.

The massive programme that was thus set in motion is yet under way. Undaunted, committed bands of Peace Promoters are active as ever. Whatever be the language we speak and wherever we may live on this planet, we are all beings of one and the same family. The supreme power that man possesses is the power to think and develop his mind along the lines of peace.

Sarvodaya Shanti Sena (Peace Brigades) Division which aims at National Harmony and co-operation has engaged in many an experiment. One important feature is to involve a Sinhala youth from the South, male or female, with a Tamil youth from the North in community service for a

period of three months in the village of one of them and to repeat the experiment in the other's village. Here, while they learn each other's language, customs and habits, they also grasp their needs. They also get opportunities available through other means to exchange their views with mutual understanding. As a result, whatever grave conflicts that arose among the others in the country, these young men and women never did any damage to the links they built up in the cause of mutual understanding. Amidst grave risks and courageously facing danger and threats, they continue to this day to serve according to their means, protecting lives, making available the relief services and succour to the afflicted and arresting the sowing of the seeds of hatred. This type of reconciliation is already an accomplished fact in the areas in the turbulent North, where thousands of families have been resettled with Sarvodaya initiative.

Realising the gravity of the current situation and being convinced of the inadequacy of piecemeal remedies administered by diverse groups, Saravodaya has drawn up its latest programme for peacemaking in Sri Lanka in its 'People's Peace Offensive' – an intriguing and rather contradictory designation to what is described as a 'Humane Approach towards Solving the National Problem'.

The People's Peace Offensive is an active intervention by organised groups of peace loving people into a situation of an armed conflict confronting violence with non-violence at the risk of their lives and forcing the conflicting parties to resolve the problem without resorting to further violence. It is called an 'Offensive', because it works with all the spiritual, moral, cultural, economic and familial forces against violence, by starting at the point of human suffering.

The veracity and relevance of the pronouncement made by Gautama the Buddha, the spiritual mentor of our country, that 'Suffering is the First Noble Truth, Greed is the Root Cause of Suffering', has been doubly revealed in the context of trial and tribulations of Sri Lanka today. Armed conflict is suffering, damage to life and property is

suffering, to part with loved ones is suffering, life in refugee camps is suffering and death under violent circumstances is suffering.

From the statements made by the government leaders two alternatives seem to be discernible to them, viz:-

(a) A negotiated political settlement and,
(b) An all out military solution.

The people of Sri Lanka have begun to realise that it would be folly to depend exclusively on a political solution. Even if a political solution is reached, in the implementation stage it might collapse and the situation would be worse than before. The masses are also aware of the unprecedented holocaust that can be the result of a military offensive. They also realise that militancy is certainly not a constructive path to spiritual, moral, cultural, economic and familial transcendence of the Tamil or Sinhala people. There is obviously an urgency for a new approach of a different dimension.

The need at this moment is for a third alternative to be initiated by a non-communal, non-violent people's force, whose starting point should be to alleviate the conditions of those who are already undergoing suffering and to prevent further escalations of violence that will lead to increased suffering in more and more people. The actions of such a People's Peace Offensive will be direct and humane, will uphold peace and justice for all and will soften the hearts of both sides to stop violence and pave the way for a peaceful settlement. The People's Peace Offensive has been launched to meet this need from the beginning of 1987.

To achieve the General Objective of the People's Peace Offensive, which are enumerated as twelve in the Document, Five General Principles have been adopted, viz:-

1. To be guided by Truth and Non-violence;
2. To function above all sectarian considerations of race, religion, language, caste and party politics;
3. To alleviate suffering of victims of all forms of violence as a priority action;
4. To suffer even death in the execution of one's duties

to bring peace and justice to affected people; and

5. To be independent, impartial and universal in all PPO actions.

Already the following 20 point Action Programme is made known to the general public, the governmental and militant leaders and steps are being taken to implement it:

1. Motivation, organisation and training of PPO groups.
2. Identification and programme formulation of priority areas.
3. Education for Peace and Justice in non-priority areas.
4. Resource mobilization and Logistical support.
5. Progressive despatch of PPO groups to priority areas.
6. Dialogues with government and militant leaders, both in the North and East and India.
7. Exchange of community leaders and dialogues between North, East and Southern areas.
8. Exchange of and dialogues with peace leaders between Sri Lanka and India, and also with other world peace leaders.
9. Development of a Communication Support System for the PPO.
10. Extension of the Peace Zones and progressive demilitarisation of further areas leading to a total ceasefire by mutual and sustainable negotiations between the government armed services and the militants.
11. Release of all detainees by persuading the government to agree to hand over them to PPO committees for rehabilitation into normal familial and community life.
12. Comprehensive assessment of loss of lives, livestock, livelihood, house and property, etc. in Peace Zones areas as well as other areas where relief and rehabilitation work has started and launching a resuscitation programme including the giving of compensation.
13. Negotiate with the government and militants and assist them to reach an agreement to normalise civilian transport services between the 'Militant' controlled areas and the rest of the country.
14. Negotiate with the government and the militants and assist them to reach an agreement to normalise the functioning of educational institutions so that children

can get back to their usual routine.

15. Similarly, assist to reach an agreement on hospital and health services and resuscitation of other public utility services.
16. Organisation of mass participation and peace education programmes throughout the country such as peace meditation, peace poojas, peace pilgrimages, peace camps, peace processions, peace marches, peace seminars, meetings and conferences and remove from the minds, specially of Sinhala and Tamil people, any fears, suspicions and distrust left over from the unfortunate happenings in the past.
17. Keep the international welfare, development aid and peace organisations informed of the PPO and its progress and solicit their co-operation, both moral and material to realise its objectives.
18. As the spiritual, moral, cultural, economic and familial infrastructure is progressively laid, and at the appropriate time play a final mediatory role between the government and the militant forces, to get both to agree to an international peace-keeping force (to be invited by the government) if necessary when total disarmament is achieved and an elected civilian rule under whatever decentralized political institutions, is re-established.
19. Initiation of programmes for the return and rehabilitation of refugees in India and other countries with the assistance of the Sri Lankan government and other governments and non-governmental organisations.
20. Assisting the militants and armed services personnel to revert to civilian life, whenever necessary.

One last comment. Peace making is a continuing and never-ending process that spiritually motivated people both as individuals and groups should pursue relentlessly. It is more difficult to make peace than break peace. For both, resources are needed. In an unjust social, political and economic world order it is easier to get resources for peace-breaking than for peace-making. So it is imperative that all people of spiritual worth and goodwill should contribute in their small way to a global effort of peace-making

The most important benefit such people should expect, is the development of their own spiritual attainments, leading to peace within oneself and one's own environment.

6.

Spiritual Awakening and Human Progress Religious Co-operation – A Living Experience

I wish to extend my sincere thanks to the United Nations University, the Japan Foundation for the United Nations University and the Japanese Committee for World Conference on Religion and Peace for inviting me to speak at this seminar on the future of mankind and cooperation among religions.

The subject I have chosen to speak on at this seminar is "Spiritual Awakening, Religious Cooperation and Human Progress".

When we speak of religion it is very important that we make a clear distinction between religion in its outer form and in its inner content. Most people attach themselves to the outer form of religion, with its traditions, customs and practices. We may even call this outer form the material culture of religion. On the other hand the inner content of religion consists of qualities such as respect for life, compassion, contentment, forgiveness and peace. This inner content of religion may be called the spiritual culture of religion.

When followers of religions give more importance to their external form or the material culture, conflicts are bound to arise. Therefore the inner content loses its vitality and religion becomes another factor that divides human beings into conflicting groups. History abounds with instances of such conflicts, which have led to violence, misery and destruction of human lives and the finest forms of art and architecture. Religion devoid of its spiritual content is sometimes worse than any other materialistic ideology that divides human beings, leading to violence and destruction. It is not possible to bring about any worthwhile and sustainable unity and co-operation among religions unless the spiritual content of religions is given more importance. In other words the most critical challenge of our times is the awakening of spirituality in man. Concepts like unity, co-operation and compassion become concrete realities only when man transcends the outer form and delves deep into the inner spirit of a human personality. Only spiritual awakening in human beings irrespective of their religious motivation can bring about lasting co-operation.

What do I mean by spiritual awakening? Permit me to explain this from a Buddhist point of view. As I am a Buddhist layman, like one in any other religion, I have to follow certain customs, practices and traditions. These may be performed in a mechanical way providing me with psychological security as an individual belonging to a larger group. At this mechanical level there is hardly anything I have in common with followers of other religions who have other forms of worship, traditions, customs and practices. I take refuge in the Buddha (the Awakened One), the Dhamma (the Doctrine) and the Sangha (the Community of Monks) and promise to abstain from Killing, Stealing, Adultery, Lying and Consuming Intoxicants.

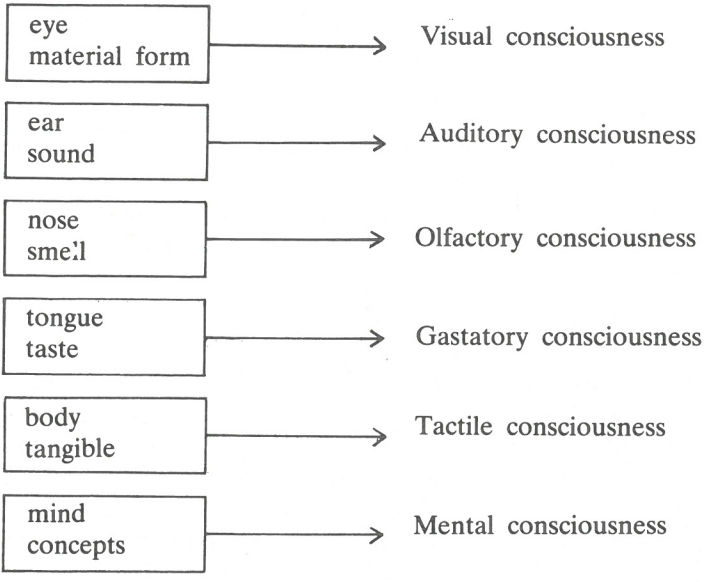
There may be others belonging to other religions who take refuge in other forms which may have quite a different character. So in the outer manifestation of religion there will always be differences which are difficult to reconcile. So at this level I do not think that true co-operation is possible. On the other hand a kind of temporary co-existence or a state of no war, while the parties are fully armed, is possible. But this is not true peace. For true peace to be there, readiness with arms has to be replaced with a deeper spiritual arsenal of understanding.

When I go from organisational form and practice of religion to inner content and awakening of my own personality the first question that I ask myself is "Who am I?", or "What is this 'I',which is the cause of all my alienation from other human beings?" According to the teachings of the Buddha there is no underlying substantial agent in my personality. The psycho-physical personality which I falsely identify as an 'I' to separate 'I' from others is only the coming together of five aggregates, namely, material form (Rūpa), feeling (Vēdanā), perception (Sannā), dispositions (Saṅkhāra) and consciousness (Vinnāna). Buddha also described this psycho-physical personality in terms of the theory of six elements. Namely, earth (Pathavi), Water (Āpo), heat (Thējo), air (Vāyo), space (Ākasa) and consciousness (Vinnāna).

The next question that arises in my mind is how the human person, this psycho-physical personality, proceeds with the act of conception. The mind (Manō) is introduced as the instrument of conceptualisation, while consciousness is the basis of experience. The Buddha spoke of the 12 spheres (Āyatana) and the 18 elements. The 12 spheres are listed as follows:-

eye – material form,
ear – sound,
nose – smell,
tongue – taste,
body – tangible, and
mind – concepts.

The 18 elements represent these 12 spheres and the 6 forms of consciousness conditioned by them.



The functions of consciousness and mind are not at all identical. Consciousness is the basis for knowledge while mind has a reflective function. Mind exerts an enormous influence through its power of conceptualisation upon human

knowledge and conduct. It is for this reason that the Buddha often spoke about bringing the mind under control and restraint. The mind (mano) and the thought process (chitta) associated with it need to be restrained, if spiritual awakening has to be brought about. Only through such a process, higher knowledge and wisdom can be attained by a human being.

Such a human being can transcend all barriers that separate human beings from one another as, in all others, he or she perceives the same kind of psycho-physical conditioned forces at work. They are all impermanent, subject to change and suffering and do not have any substantial quality. This knowledge and wisdom enables a human being to perceive the fundamental oneness of all human beings and thus develop selfless relationships. This is what I mean by developing unity at a spiritual level.

I am sure all religions in their essence have teachings that go deep into the analysis of the human consciousness, mind and thought processes. At those levels external forms become increasingly less important and to that extent human beings can come closer to one another. Therefore instead of religious co-operation a kind of spiritual communion can come into being in the affairs of people. Without this kind of spiritual awakening all other kinds of advancements will come to nought.

The fundamental question before those who believe in the importance of religions as instruments to build peace and justice, therefore, is how to bring about such a transformation of understanding in the minds and thought processes of human beings who belong to various religions in the world. I personally believe that much more efforts should be put in to bring about inner spiritual awakening of human beings using religious organisational structures and resources but transcending religious barriers. For example inter-faith groups can organize meditation practices under the guidance of experienced teachers so that more and more human beings of different faiths can realize the underlying spiritual unity among all people. A deeper understanding of the consciousness and the mind processes will certainly

awaken the personalities of followers of religions, helping them to get closer to the teachings of the founders of religions. Here what becomes more important is not the outer form but the inner content of religion.

The vast majority of people in our world are poor, powerless and deprived. No amount of meditational practices will catch up with them unless their basic human needs are satisfied. As much as these needs are of a material nature they also have a non-material dimension. While sufficient food is necessary for their normal physical growth they need participatory opportunities for the development of their mind.

This brings us to the realization that spiritual awakening should be closely linked with a programme for economic and political emancipation and justice.

When I speak of political and economic emancipation I am not overambitious as to call for a sudden macro-level revolutionary change in the present national and international arrangements. At the macro-level even religious hierachies are often linked up with unjust political and economic empires which are too strong to be dealt with in this manner. I am only referring to those micro-level community organisations who have to be liberated from political and economic bondage simultaneously with a spiritual awakening.

Macro-level organisations, including very healthy ones such as United Nations institutions, are lamenting over the fact that their capacity to deal with deepening crises has been outstripped by the very acceleration of the crises. Weapons of mass destruction, widespread armed conflicts, unstable monetary systems, destruction of ecosystems, rise of racism, widening poverty-gap, terrorism, breakdown of social systems and so on are cited as processes that plague humanity. Governments and national and transnational macro-institutions appear to be doing their best for the survival of their institutions rather than this planet earth or the human beings and other living forms inhabiting it.

My contention is, for the sake of human survival and survival of life on this earth, vested interests should make a sacrifice of their politico-economic institutions. They should decentralise

decision-making powers to levels closest to the people. Human beings still possess the ingenuity and creativity to decide by themselves and to adjust themselves to a sustainable life - style within a given set of circumstances conditioned by natural and other relevant factors. Tragedy is, in most countries this opportunity and freedom are denied to them by external powers which dominate over them.

Without a politico-economic environment conducive to spiritual awakening, it is extremely difficult and almost impossible to halt the deepening global crises. It is for this reason I insist that whatever global approach we make has to be firmly founded on tens of thousands of small communities spread throughout our globe, who have to be made to participate fully in reconstructing our civilization. Spiritual Awakening, Religious Co-operation and Human Progress can become realities in decentralised micro-approaches of such a nature.

In Sri Lanka such a movement of Spiritual Awakening leading to Religious Co-operation and Human Progress has been developing now for nearly three decades. It is popularly known as the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement, which literally means Awakening of all through shared labour. The Movement was inspired by the Gandhian Sarvodaya Movement in India and developed on a foundation of Buddhist principles. The movement is not religious in a sectarian sense. It is founded on spiritual principles transcending religious barriers so that people belonging to all religions can work together for social, political and economic progress. It has spread over to 8000 village communities in Sri Lanka involving about three million people, which is nearly 20% of the total population. It has developed fraternal links with similar people's movements in other countries including Rissho Kosei-kai, Niwano Peace Foundation and Life Dynamics group in Japan.

I will very briefly describe how this movement functions. Firstly it invites people to volunteer to serve in communities by sacrificing their time, thought and efforts. This sacrificial act results in building houses, water supplies, irrigation facilities, sanitary and health needs, agricultural works and

other forms of community services, helping needy people to satisfy their basic needs. In the process of participating in such activities, there are spiritual, moral and cultural awakening programmes that are carried out as an integral part of such development activities. These programmes help participating individuals to awaken their personalities by cultivating qualities of loving kindness, compassionate actions, selfless joy and equanimity. Similarly, as a group they can cultivate qualities of sharing, pleasant speech, constructive activity and equality in association.

People of different religious persuasions thus come together on a spiritual motivation. In other words processes of spiritual motivation, community service, religious co-operation and human progress follow one after the other.

With communities where these kinds of programmes are initiated, a psycho-social infrastructure is built where its members feel one with humanity. They are capable of transcending religious, linguistic, ethnic, ideological and racial barriers. In Sri Lanka in the Sarvodaya villages all communities live together in peace without any communal problems. This psycho-social infrastructure is followed up with more and more sophisticated programmes of balanced spiritual and material development, improving the quality of life of people, making full use of scientific knowledge and appropriate technology. This is a brief account of the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement in Sri Lanka.

There are many people's movements around the world like Sarvodaya who have thus harmonized spiritual values and material development for a sustainable life style. In these movements I see the needed frame-work for the survival of humanity. Unfortunately, most of the government and inter-governmental organisations and multi-national commercial establishments who have the capacity to assist these efforts underestimate the validity and capabilities of these micro-organizations and hardly support them. Mere recognition of their services is not enough, what is needed is concrete action to support these people's efforts, which are the critical processes at work to change the balance in

favour of survival of value systems, nature and the human species itself.

(From a speech delivered by Dr A.T. Ariyaratne, President of the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka to the "International Seminar on The Future of Mankind and Co-operation among Religions" organised by the Japan Foundation for the United Nations, University of Tokyo, Japan, on 15th April 1987.)

7.

Five Lessons and A Goal

From my twelfth year I developed the habit of helping others. Very few in my village had the means to attend high school but my parents, though not rich, sent all of us-my two elder sisters, myself, my younger brother and two younger sisters-to secondary school. Whatever I learned at school I thought I should share with the less fortunate children in the village, so from that time until I left for higher studies in Colombo, I conducted evening classes free of charge for village children.

Sharing is a virtue practised in the Sinhala Buddhist culture into which I was born, and was always encouraged by my parents. It is considered a meritorious act to share one's labour, land, wealth, knowledge, skills or love with others.

Today, after over 40 years, with fair acceptance and recognition of my community services both in my own country and abroad, I feel embarrassed when a visitor asks me, "What motivated you to start the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement?" My usual reply is that I cannot think of any motivation as such, but I know that the desire was always there and that it unfolded as a natural process. I cannot think of my life without it being integrated and related to other living beings.

This raises the question, what are the factors that influence our personality development? Our social culture teaches us that our personalities are conditioned by biological, environmental, karmic and mind factors. These factors in dynamic relationship go into the formation of what we generally conceive of as "I", "Me", "You", and so on. But in actual fact, when we go into ourselves and try to find this "I", it is impossible to do so.

On the other hand the Buddha taught us over 2,500 years ago that when we look into ourselves we discover the presence of five factors: form, feelings, sensations, dispositions and consciousness. There is no substantiality called an independent "I." "I" is only an illusion.

In the process of my work, the more I tried to analyse

this conventional "I," the more I realized that "I" is not a doer but a series of changing conditions and processes. So I can speak about myself, my work and what I learned only on the understanding that "I" and "Mine" are only conventional terms and have no substantiality.

This "I," seen by outsiders as "Ariyaratne", is engaged in community development and welfare and peace activities under the auspices of the popular movement known as the "Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement". But for me, three decades of such involvement is only an experience in awareness building within myself. I have attempted to practise being aware every moment about the relationships I have with other living beings and with the rest of nature around me. The more this awareness becomes a natural process, the more my joy of living. But this kind of joy is different from the acquisitive kind of joy one gets from the satisfaction of mental or physical needs. It is a detached joy. Achievements and failures, accolades and insults do not disturb me very much, but I want to awaken my personality so that I am not elated or disturbed by these at all. In other words, personality awakening for me is living in total awareness. I believe the first lesson I have learned, therefore, is that human beings cannot achieve anything unless they pay sufficient heed to their total awakening in relation to others with whom they come into contact.

In certain Buddhist teachings this awakening and relationship is described by two words, bodhi citta and bodhi carya, which convey the meaning that all living beings possess the potential to develop their minds for total enlightenment. The process by which that enlightenment is attained is one's conduct. When reacting to the outside world, if one remembers the potential that every living being possesses, then what guides one is not selfishness, but selflessness. All life should be precious to every human being. Hence, all life should be respected by everyone if he is to obtain full enlightenment. For a Buddhist, total enlightenment is the most important objective in life.

We are living in times when, due to the failure of human

beings to understand this principle, not only civilization but the very existence of life on this planet is in danger of extinction. My concern today is how I can bring this consciousness to other human beings. The need for consciousness sharing, therefore, is the second lesson I have learned.

Consciousness sharing has to begin at the family level because the family is the smallest group in our society. Groups of families who live as neighbours in villages or urban communities can then be helped to share their consciousness for the total awakening of their communities. Similarly consciousness sharing can be extended to national communities and to the world.

Awakening at each level supplements the awakenings at all other levels. For example, if a family can live its life with each member striving for total enlightenment, and follow a code of conduct, mutually sharing their consciousness, such a family enhances the process of awakening human groups at other levels. Similarly, if a national community consists of a sufficient number of individuals and families who have reached a critical level of shared consciousness, it will influence other individuals and groups in a similar direction of awakening. The totality of all such processes of awakening is expressed by the word *Sarvodaya.*

When we look at our societies we observe there are concepts, customs, practices and institutions which profess to work for the spiritual life of man. They also profess to uplift moral relationships. As an offshoot of spiritual and moral life human beings build up patterns of culture. To build up such cultural patterns they draw from not only spiritual and moral value systems and resources, but from the social, economic and political realities around them. None of these aspects can contribute independently to total human development; what occurs is continuous inter-action.

So the third lesson I have learned is that any program aimed at transforming individual and social conditions must be of an integrated nature, concerned with all aspects of life – spiritual, moral, cultural, social, economic and political.

We have to remember that it is the same human being under different circumstances who has to play different roles such as father, farmer, husband, Buddhist, creditor, debtor, and voter. It is absurd to formulate a program for him which looks after his interests as a farmer if in the process of its implementation his life style as a Buddhist or parent is disturbed. What we need is the improvement of his quality of life in all aspects.

The promoters of a money economy as the foundation of all forms of improvement, have done irreparable damage to the quality of the peaceful, healthy, contented and clean lives of most communities in the world. Their main concern has been to put more money and goods into the hands of people without the least concern about the harm they are doing to their natural surroundings and to the traditional practices that sustained their social cohesion and humane relationships. This attitude on the part of the elite who formulated national and international development plans for the benefit of the powerless and the deprived, made worse their conditions in most parts of the world. What they succeeded in achieving was to draw a negligible proportion of the non-elite class into the elitist minority. The poorer and the powerless majority increased in dependency and powerlessness. Under these circumstances, the elitist indentification of nations as "first," "second" and "third" worlds is no longer true. These worlds have transcended geographical boundaries and have become universal phenomena where in any nation these worlds can be seen to exist side by side.

The fourth lesson I have learned, therefore, is that if we are to build a just and peaceful world I, and others like me, have to devote time and effort to awaken the consciousness of small groups and communities around the world and develop strategies, structures and organisations to link them globally. Their shared consciousness will then be truly universal. Their technologies will be harmless to the human and physical environment, their resource usage will be more akin to renewability, their capital and technological exchange will create interdependence and not dependency,

and their quality of life will be expressed in terms of selflessness, love and sharing, rather than egocentricity, exploitation and competition.

The practical question is how this resource of global survival can be harnessed justly and peacefully. it cannot be a "top down" process. It has to be a "bottom up" activity taking place in thousands of places around the world and slowly but firmly releasing lateral waves of psycho-social, physical and organizational net-working. In all countries of the world people motivated by felt needs have already informally, non-formally or formally created various ways, structures and institutions to survive, sustain, and sometimes improve, the quality of life. In richer and technologically advanced countries these institutions are visible and even have an impact on what is happening at macro levels. Some of them may be confrontational, sometimes violently and sometimes nonviolently. In poorer, technologically less advanced countries, these institutions may be not as visible or confrontational, neither are they submerged by the existing establishment. There is a cultural sustenance that keeps them alive and playing a positive role.

The fifth lesson I have learned, then, is that these movements can be interlinked for mutual benefit and strength as long as there is a common ethical rule which guides their activities: cross fertilization of various cultures in a direction towards peace, justice, ecological balance, environmental purity and happiness for humanity.

When I observe the world around me I see many people trying to tackle the same problems, but in an entirely different way. They do not seem to consider it important that the transformation should begin within the consciousness of the individual himself and then elevated to the level of shared consciousness, nor recognize that shared consciousness must be the foundation of the spiritual, moral and cultural infrastructure on which social, political and economic institutions around the world can be positively restructured.

The projects and programs of intergovernmental and

private agencies that lack this kind of integrated approach and cohesion are bound to fail. It is like trying to paint and outfit a ship while it is slowly sinking due to leaks in the hull.

The spaceship earth is sinking while some people are trying to put secondary things in order. What is generally happening is the management of the day-to-day crises while the more serious, disintegrational problems are not addressed. Moreover, the top part of the national pyramid is too heavy and is crumbling, and the elite are too distant from the people. What is necessary is not crisis management but a total change of heart on the part of society as a whole, but there is only a remote chance of success if we leave the problem in the hands of the elite. That is why people's organizations around the world have to assume the responsibility of building alternative social, economic and political structures imbued with spiritual, cultural and moral values. For those groups working in the rich world the goal can be an alternative society. For those working in poorer countries the goal must be a "no poverty, no affluence" society and must be approached on a continuum. Both of these can be thought of as a post-modern society.

A shared consciousness between people's movements is the true beginning for a new world order. The availability of communication technology, higher literacy levels, worsening economic conditions and other crises, all favour the success of such a movement on a global scale.

I intend to spend the remaining years of my life in pursuit of this goal. Whether I succeed or fail is immaterial. What is important is that in the process I continue to live from moment to moment with joy.

8.

Social Service and Humanity – What Buddhists Can Contribute

I thank you all very sincerely for inviting me to speak to you at the 13th International Buddhist Conference, sponsored by the International Buddhist Brotherhood Association, Tokyo, Japan. I am also delighted about the venue you have chosen for this meeting, namely, the Mahinda Social Welfare Centre at Ranmuthugala, which is indeed a Buddhist model of social service, developed under the leadership of Ven. Silogama Wimala Thero.

We are all fortunate to have as the Chairman of this Conference, one of the most erudite Buddhist scholars of Sri Lanka, Ven. Baddegama Wimalawansa Anunayaka Maha Thero, for whom I have a tremendous personal respect.

Our supreme teacher, Lord Buddha, not only taught us a philosophy which should guide us as his followers in the field of social service but he also taught us the appropriate methods and techniques of putting that philosophy into social action. Further, he founded the noble Order of the Sangha to implement the Buddhist objectives of social service.

In a brief period of 10 minutes allotted to me, I do not propose to go into the details of these three areas of philosophy, technology and organisational discipline, which Lord Buddha propounded, but will only limit myself to certain issues facing Buddhist social service as a whole in the context of present day problems.

The uniqueness of Lord Buddha's teaching was the opening, it provided both for the highly educated individual as well as for the simple, intelligent human being to understand the Dhamma according to their own capacity. Let us take the following example:

"To help those who suffer to overcome their suffering, to help those who are in fear to overcome their fear, to help those who are bereaved to overcome their bereavement and to make all sentient beings well and happy". In these four objectives, the essence of social service a Buddhist is expected to do is embodied.

Suffering referred to here is the lack of bare essentials for the physical well-being of living beings. The fear that is referred to is the psychological insecurity brought about by physical dangers to life and property, danger to the freedom of expression, freedom of movement, the continuity of the species and so on. Bereavement is the condition of mental suffering resulting by the ignorance of the Dhamma, bringing about addiction to alcohol and drugs, suicides, mental illnesses and so on.

Now let us make a portfolio of social action open to us in the context of these three sectors. Physical suffering can be the result of ecological imbalances, environmental pollution, lack of water for drinking and irrigational purposes, shortages in clothing, not having proper shelter, non-availability of health care, sanitation and medical facilities, the paucity of sufficient energy sources, communication facilities, and so on.

Fear may be caused by violation of human rights by governments as well as other coercive groups, malfunction of the administration of justice, inaccessibility to equality before the law, economic exploitation, unjust distribution of the ownership of the means of production, loss of livelihood, terrorism, wars, frequency of natural disasters and so on.

When we think of bereavement, I would rather confine it to a lack of a spiritual base in a human being, his family and the community in which he is living. Ignorance of the Dhamma first distorts and then destroys the entire value system. Interpersonal relationships take very violent forms. Social, political and economic institutions give way to unjust and sometimes criminal competitions, ending up with whole societies plunging into utterly confused situations. Human beings devoid of the knowledge of Dhamma, begin to suffer untold mental agonies and commercialised societies provide them with outlets in the form of drug usage and other palliatives.

When we ponder over these issues, we begin to see the vast field of activities open to us as Buddhists. To me, Lord

Buddha was the supreme champion of human freedom, well-being and total liberation. I would be the last to call the palliative measures taken by Buddhists to distribute some food or clothing, or build a hut for a poor family, the way of Buddhist social service. Undoubtedly these are all charitable acts, but what is more important is to remove the causes that lead to suffering, have a clear idea of the path leading to the cessation of suffering and then direct our individual and collective efforts in that direction.

The modern acceptance of a welfare state and its citizens being reduced to a level of dependency on the state, is a non-Buddhist concept. A Buddhist ideal should be a welfare society where loving kindness, compassionate action, altruistic joy and equanimity can express themselves freely from human personalities. Similarly, in such a welfare society sharing, pleasant language, constructive activities and equality in association should be the salient features. If Buddhists accept this Asokan ideal of a welfare society, then they should work against the centralization of power, the fragmentation of society on grounds of caste, class, race and religion, the imposition of large scale, capital intensive, highly industrialized technologies on the people. They should fight against the pollution of our air, water, soil and seas, the creation of stresses and strains by large scale industries, gross violations of human rights and the massive buildups of conventional and nuclear armaments.

On the other hand, a Buddhist should work towards a highly decentralized, spiritually inspired, sustainable community where the salient characteristics will be a spiritually rich psychological infrastructure, non-violent social relationships, decentralized political and economic units and a life style based on simplicity.

However, when we look at most of the so-called Buddhist countries, we do not see this kind of approach taking place. What is happening is a blind imitation of Western societies, which had the unfortunate historical experience of building on a commercialized and war-like religious base. The greatest contribution that the Buddhists of the world can

make towards the survival and sustainable progress of the human civilization is to reverse this trend towards the Buddhist ideal of a world order where humans as well as other living beings have an equal chance to overcome physical and mental suffering and fear.

If any of you have any doubts about the practicability of these ideals, I would like to invite you to have a look at what the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka has developed during the past thirty years. I am sure that Sarvodaya would be a good eye opener to all those who think that Buddhist ideals are anachronistic. In every sector I have referred to above, we have developed living programmes of Buddhist ideals in development and social service in action, in over 8000 Sinhala, Tamil, Muslim, Buddhist and non-Buddhist villages with the participation of no less than three million people. So if you have the time I invite you to visit a Sarvodaya village close to this venue of the meeting and convince yourselves that Buddhist philosophy is not only relevant to the modern times but it may also be the only hope which we may have to enter the 20th Century.

I believe that your deliberations will throw a new light into this most needed endeavour of our time.

9.

Communication for Rural Development in a Changing Society

I am very happy to be here with you today and thank the National Association for Total Education, the Sri Lanka Foundation Institute and the Asian South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education, for inviting me today and giving me an opportunity to address this distinguished gathering.

One of the first principles I learnt from the rural culture in which I was born, was the Principle of Change. We were always taught that one of the cardinal facts that Lord Buddha wanted us to remember is that there is nothing absolute within the human personality or in anything else in the realms of mind and matter.

Therefore, everything is in a state of change every moment. Looking at our own minds and bodies, or what we call our personality, it is but a fleeting agglomeration of the four elements, Pathavi (Earth – representing solidity), Āpo (Water – representing fluidity), Thējo (Heat), Vāyo (Air) and the four constituents of sensation, perception, conception and consciousness. In other words, a human personality can be referred to as the 'Five Aggregates of Grasping' (Upādānakkanda). A person clings to these aggregates as his 'personality' – namely, material form, feelings or sensations, perception, dispositions and consciousness or the continuity individuated by dispositions. Even consciousness is nothing more than the act of being conscious. These changing, non-absolute, psycho-physical entities construct numerous ideological, technological, structural forms in cultural, social, political and economic spheres. These too are subject to constant change.

When the human being himself is not aware of the nature of his own psycho-physical structure, certain unhealthy processes originating in greed, illwill and ignorance are generated, bringing about a lot of suffering to human beings and other forms of life including the plant kingdom. In such an event, the natural state of change is forgotton and human beings behave as if their lives are permanent, their possessions absolute and the power they wield is eternal. In such a state of mind, the more privileged and powerful individuals and coteries in society generate destructive

processes which go beyond their control and continue to flourish long after them, bringing about a lot of misery and deprivation to all life.

Desertification which is taking place in African countries, mass scale soil erosions that are happening in most places in the world, acid rains falling over Western Europe and North America, increased radio activity in the air and in food, disturbing the ozone layer over the North Pole, are some of the global examples of the self-generating, destructive processes that continue to exist long after the persons and groups responsible for such actions are dead and gone.

The evil consequences of man's organised greed and evil, springing from his ignorance of the way in which his own personality changes, are not only confined to urban areas. They have affected and are increasingly affecting the rural areas as well.

I do not know of any country in this region, perhaps with the exception of the least Western oriented countries like Burma, where rural communities have been spared of these disastrous consequences. Millions of acres of jungle areas are felled, huge irrigation dams and hydro power installations are built in the name of development, with the promise of improving the quality of life of the rural masses. But the environmental, ecological and psychological destruction brought about by these gigantic, capital intensive, high technology ventures have not yet been properly assessed and their results communicated to the rural people.

Take the example of the Green Revolution. Nobody could dispute the need to feed the hungry people and the increasing population. Science and technology have to be applied to improve production in a sustainable manner. But if these innovations are done in such a fashion that the life of the soil is destroyed with huge doses of chemicals, natural pest control is replaced by lethal pesticides inimical to human life and the increasing costs of inputs have to be borne by the already poor farming population, then there is something radically wrong in the application of this science

and technology for the benefit of the masses. To my thinking, all this knowledge and inputs in the long run, have given more benefits to the already privileged national and multi-national companies and the elite classes associated with them rather than to the teeming millions in Asia, Africa or Latin America.

I prefaced my remarks with the above references because the words, 'Communication, Rural Development and Social Change' should be studied in depth, taking into consideration the present day realities of the world.

In the past, rural communities were not so much subjected to outside influences as to disturb their culture or way of life. The Central Authorities, after collecting their taxes and getting convinced of their political loyalties, left them alone allowing them to pursue their life of struggle to survive within their culture. Prior to colonial times, whenever there were just rulers, who were knowledgeable about one form or another of the Dhamma (realities, like the Principle of Change), the rural communities survived not only with their physical needs satisfied, but also managed to realize with their surplus time and resources, great cultural achievements in the areas of religion, arts & crafts, literature, architecture and even managed to construct great physical infrastructures like water reservoirs and irrigational systems. This is how in Sri Lanka the Tank and the Dagoba came to be recognised as the symbols of economic prosperity and spiritual awakening.

The colonial powers attempted to gear rural production into an international commercial system. So the sustainable, need-based, agricultural systems were geared to a greed-based cash crop economy dependent to this day on the controllers of the international trade. This is understandable as the invaders came in search of wealth. But the worst kind of invasion into our rural life was done by the indigenous power elite who surpassed the colonial masters in their imposition of alien educational, health, economic and political systems indiscriminately on rural communities. The rural people lost their traditional forms of

social organisation, economic arrangements and political institutions, without a just opportunity to consider the pros and cons of such changes. Communication itself, being controlled from above, played a vital role in the infringement of their human rights.

Let me bring your minds to our rural scene today. The centrally imposed laws and administrative rules which govern the people in a rural community are not of their own making. The package was made for them, ironically on their own behalf, by different coteries of politicians who governed this country during the last four decades. Except for casting a vote once in five or ten years, to a candidate presented to them by one political party or another, they had no choice in the running of the legislative or administrative affairs of their community. Along with the centralization of legislative and administrative power and the lapses in the administration of justice as well as several other shortcomings at the social leadership level, some of the youths took to violence. They were surreptitiously supported by vested interests in the neighbouring country, obviously for their own self-interest. The government in power, instead of going to the causes that led to this violent situation, for reasons of expediency, opted to act in a more repressive manner, taking over emergency powers and passing repressive legislation such as the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

Today, most rural communities, where youths are neither militants nor supporters of the establishment, are pressed from both sides. The rural communities as a whole are at the mercy of armed youths on one side and the executors of government policies on the other side. I do not see the possibility for a dynamic, democratic and non-violent transformation of rural societies in a psychological and physical environment of this nature. To make it worse, in the Northern and Eastern Provinces of Sri Lanka, a visible superpower has cast more than its shadow on our villages. I need not mention to you the similar situations in Laos, Cambodia and parts of the Philippines. So rural

development has to be perceived in the context of these realities in our countries.

Speaking of communication, there is no doubt that technological developments have placed in the hands of man, unprecedented tools to communicate information and knowledge, which can lead to wisdom. Unfortunately, those who control these communication tools, do not necessarily represent the interests of the rural communities. Mostly they are used to sell a commodity or an idea. Propaganda to change people's ideas towards a person or a commercial product, seems to be the dominant activity of the media of the mass communicators. In a predominantly poor country like India, the wedding ceremony of a Maharajah, involving collossal expenditure, has more news value in this country, than educating the people about protecting themselves against encephalitis, which has already taken the toll of a couple of hundred lives. The choice of what needs to be communicated is not in the hands of the rural or urban people. It is an exclusive right of governments, multi-nationals and national elites. Selective information and appropriate knowledge helpful for all round development of masses of people, are not the priorities of those who control communication systems.

'Where lies hope?' is the question which serious minded development thinkers and administrators should ask themselves. For four decades I have been a rural development worker myself. For three of these four decades, I have been involved with the Sarvodaya Movement. From this experience, I would like to make the following statements for your consideration:

(1) You cannot think of rural development any longer without taking into consideration development as a whole. Development should be considered not only underlining social and economic development but equal emphasis also should be paid to spiritual, moral, cultural and political development. Development should be a total, integrated process which should

improve the quality of life of human personalities, families and rural and urban communities, going up to the national community level.

(2) The present method of planning from above should be radically changed, taking into consideration the sustenance or the continuity of the national politico-economic system, into a system where priority is given to the needs of those communities in rural and urban areas so that the national plan is a reflection of the true aspirations of the majority of the people.

(3) Maximum effort should be put to educate the people using all available media to clearly define the goals of development – rural as well as national. For example, in the case of the Sarvodaya Movement, we have put before ourselves the goal of a sustainable, no-poverty, no-affluence society. Individuals and groups direct all their resources and energies to realize this goal in the context of their own social, political and economic milieu.

(4) While every kind of new and relevant knowledge, coming from every possible source is absorbed in this effort, the aggregate of all such inputs is to realize the goal that they have set before themselves. Communication therefore, is more of a lateral and bottom-up educational nature rather than a pre-planned, top-down, propaganda exercise.

(5) Social change is not considered in a kind of fatalistic manner as inevitable. On the other hand, selective and goal oriented change is promoted at a pace which does not disturb the existing dynamic stability of a culture. The change is always for the better and for self-fulfilment and self-realization rather than for frustration and self-annihilation.

I believe that the above mentioned five principles will suffice for us to think on a saner line on the subject of communication, development and change.

However, the intensity of the aggressive nature of opposing forces for such a plan of action is strong and is internationally aligned. Therefore, the individuals and organisations following such a plan of action are bound to be ridiculed, abused, harassed and persecuted. As Gandhiji mentioned, one has to pass through these four stages and survive if he or she has to reach the stage of respect, which is, in a way, more dangerous because when people and establishments respect you, you are bound to lose your mental equilibrium and come to a level of self-justification. This should be avoided at all costs. This is where a kind of visionary spirit or a missionary zeal has to be inculcated in individuals and organisations to make a success of these efforts for social change. This is the reason why non-violent, revolutionary movements like Sarvodaya try to build a very strong spiritual infrastructure within themselves, while they move on towards the total development of man and society.

I thank all of you for being patient with me.

10.

Sarvodaya and the Economy

Introduction

Sarvodaya, from its very inception, has involved itself in diverse activities that could be called economic. The difference between then and now is in the effort we take to execute, in a more formalised manner, the economic activities that we are currently engaged in at various levels. In other words, we have now focussed our attention on a wide range of activities dealing with the Sarvodaya Economic Philosophy and Policies, processes and programmes in accordance with that philosophy, including responsibilities delegated to various sections at various levels to include SEEDS (Sarvodaya Economic Enterprises Development Services) as well as the economic linkages we make with local and foreign Institutions.

For the past few months, a metamorphosis is under way in the Movement, the most important being its structural transformation giving birth to new structures. You might well remember the mentions I made of Professionalization and community understanding at our last Annual General Meeting. In the process of professionalization a small but a very important minority of personnel, with basic professional qualifications has closed hands with a wide majority of Sarvodians who have been nurtured within the movement in a particular way. For a successful future of Sarvodaya, it is a "Sine qua non" that both these categories should progress together as a torrent with singleness of purpose, and mutual awareness and respect.

It should not be forgotten that in spite of not having any formal professional training, the Sarvodaya Service cadre who are endowed with an immeasurable wealth of practical experience gained by working among the people far exceeds those in all other non-governmental, as well as governmental organizations. However, we also have to accept the fact that the majority of these service personnel, the very backbone of our Movement, possessed though they are of practical and theoretical skills in Welfare and Development activities, yet lack formal professional training and proficiency

in Management, Accountancy, Marketing and Production Technology.

While it becomes obligatory on the part of the professionally skilled newly-joined to share their technical leadership and knowledge with them, they should in turn be receptive to maximum cross-pollination and influence by the majority service cadre, in the latter's spirit of service, commitment, experience and interpersonal relationships.

What I felt during the past few weeks is that this involuntary internourishment does not take place to the expected degree; and that, in place of such a creative inter-nourishment, there is evident a misdirection of both time and energy due to lack of understanding in inter-action among various personal as well as sub-groupings. Hence it is my conviction that those of us who are at the higher levels of decision making and decision implementation in the Movement should get together and promote collective and serious discussion. What begins today is the first step in that direction.

I would at the outset, like to express my views on the subjects I had mentioned earlier.

Sarvodaya Economic Policy

When talking of a Sarvodaya Economic Policy, what should be kept in mind first is that it is invariably embedded in the general Sarvodaya Philosophy. One cannot talk of a separate economic philosophy outside the common Sarvodaya philosopy. It is only if we have an understanding of the Sarvodaya philosophy that we can conceptualize an economic philosophy. An economic philosophy can be built only within the framework of the total Sarvodaya phflosophy; not outside it. A person who does not accept the Sarvodaya philosophy as a totality will find it difficult to comprehend and accept the Sarvodaya Economic Philosophy in toto. Hence, what one should grasp at the very outset – summarily though – are a few sources of the Sarvodaya Philosophy.

Sarvodaya views both the living and the non-living world as a totality. So of mankind too. Man is viewed in such a way as to bring his total personality into focus. The sole objective of Sarvodaya is to bring about the maximum awakening of an individual, a country and the entire world, spiritually, morally, culturally, socially, politically and economically. We have analysed this in detail at various stages, both conceptually and objectively as total personality awakening, village awakening, village autonomy, urban awakening, country awakening and universal awakening.

Similarly, it has already been explained as to what Sarvodaya philosophy means by spiritual, moral, cultural, social, economic and political development. I do not intend dwelling on these twelve points afresh; I would like to air my views only on a few points that need to be explained when talking of the economy. I would only state that interactions have to take place in all these aspects and among all individuals in the world from each person to all levels of mankind. Suffice it to say that on this state of equilibrium rests justice, peace and contentment of all – from each individual to all mankind.

Political Economy

Modern economy is inextricably interwoven with modern politics. Any inquiry made of the economy should be done with an awareness of the politics in that context. Sarvodaya totally rejects power politics pursued on the basis of divided party affiliations, as much as she rejects coercive institutional structures along with their technologies and theories. Instead, Sarvodaya places confidence in a people's participatory and people's service oriented political system, non-violent political structures and processes that should be built as an alternative, and attempts to inspire and motivate people along the lines of achieving them.

The modern economic system is not the product of a natural growth. It can be compared into a grafting performed

externally on to a living organism for the purpose of its accelerated organic growth. It is a politico economy, transported along with colonialism and grafted extraneously on to communities in many countries and has become the legacy of the world. It is capable of keeping the majority oppressed, weak and poor, while maintaining a few powerful and affluent. It destorys natural resources beyond replenishment. Instead of channelling human resources towards creative objectives, they are misused for the production of nuclear and traditional armaments, which in turn are used not only for personal violence and destruction of property, but even for collective violence including the very annihilation of civilization. The violent politico-economic structures built by greed, hatred and delusion which in turn were organized by groupings of people, have asserted an independence beyond human control and have become self-propellants, destroying the human societies. Those who attempt controlling them have invariably turned out to be their prisoners taking themselves as well as others towards destruction.

State Terrorism, Commercial Institutional Terrorism, Political Terrorism, Individual and Collective Terrorism outside that of the State, are all nothing but the self-propelling results of this politico-economic structure, not their cause. The cause is the faulty politico-economy and the spiritual, moral and cultural desolation caused by it, as well as the faulty educational, health and leadership structures and communal affiliations, rules, regulations and methods that give its sustenance.

When we speak of a Sarvodaya economy, the word economy does not denote merely a process of dealing with the production, distribution and consumption of commodities needed or desired by the community. It includes the value system on which these activities are performed, the social expense, the type of resources, the pattern of life-style – including those whose needs are met. These are also questions that engage our attention and scrutiny.

There is no argument in that basic goods and services like food, clothing, housing, education, health facilities, energy required by an ever-growing population have to be promptly produced. In preparing a list of priorities, Sarvodaya gives pride of place to the NEEDS of the majority, not their DESIRES. A group of people who have inherited a greater share of local and foreign productions by unfair institutional means have exploited modern communication science to conscientize the public that luxury goods and services desirable for a life-style they have acquired on the basis of their fanciful craving are the goods and services required by the entire community. These communication media are not utilized to transform the latent desires inherent in the people into their real needs with restraint. Since the communication media is in itself a lucrative means of investment for generating wealth, what they do is to fan up the flames of craving and desire still further. The cumulative result of all this is that the common man, the innocent masses are forced to suffer the evil effects of world-wide poverty, environmental and mental pollution, frustration, nuclear threats, war, drug abuse, terrorism, injustice, political chaos and social unrest.

In building a Sarvodaya Economic Philosophy, we have to think of the evil effects of the modern economy. As we are compelled to engage in an economic activity in their very midst, we should leave no room for aggravating these evil effects by whatever we do. Instead, we should pave the way for an alternative economy to supersede the existing one. We have to uphold a code of principles culled from our economic pilosophy as clear guidelines, on some of which I shall deal with in due course.

People's Participation to the Fore

Another important aspect that has to be examined when talking of the Sarvodaya Philosophy is the question of the ideal society we believe in.

The ideal society accepted by the rulers of many countries

that have asserted independence since the middle of this century from colonialism, is that envisaged in the concept of the Welfare State, the choice of the European countries. Sarvodaya rejects this concept. It places faith in the concept of a Welfare Society. What is embodied in the Welfare State concept is the sovereignty of the State. What is at the core of the Welfare Society is the Sovereignty of the people. When a State arrogates to itself the full responsibility of the Welfare of its subjects, the people's traditional practice of working for their own benefit gets relegated to a secondary place. Opportunities to enhance the sublime human qualities of compassion, kindness, love, sacrifice and collective action get restricted and the way is paved to get all human services accomplished by the coercive power of the state in place of the collective power of the people. The power of the powers that be and of the bureaucracy raises its head above the power of the people. Administrative structures and efficient technologies supersede human ethics. The consequence of this is the proliferation of political loyalty, corruption, centralization and the irreparable widening of the gap between the state and its subjects. Financial and human resources that could be utilized to improve the quality of community life get wasted in the maintenance of the aforesaid colossal structures and exorbitant technologies.

A People-centred System

The starting point of a Welfare State is the individual, the family and the village and urban community. While their own self-reliance, collective activity and value system should come first in the satisfaction of their basic and secondary needs, State intervention should only be peripheral to clear the legal obstacles that may impede the implementation of the Welfare Society concept and to allocate resources and appropriate technologies required for that process in accordance with the people's expectations. The Western concept of decentralization does not arise here. What is meant by the Western concept of decentralization is the dissolution of macro productions and decentralizing them. However, its direction remains centralized. The

Sarvodaya concept is to re-surface the concepts of people's self government and people's consensus. The task of a National State resurging at local level is to collectivize the social, political and economic structures leaving scope and latitude for those small units to build their own identity and thereby make way for a national identity to emerge.

Priority to Needs

What one means by Basic Human Needs here are, the environment, water, clothing, food, housing, health, energy, communication, education and cultural and spiritual needs that are vitally essential to propagate human existence. Under Secondary Needs come schools, hospitals, post-offices, roads, transport facilities, irrigational activities, markets, places of religious worship, play grounds, etc. that are collectively required. Tertiary Needs include services like Highways, Railways, Police, National Security, Foreign Relations, National Economy, National Legal Services, etc. that have to be obtained at National level, beyond community level.

Communication Deception

The fundamental characteristic of the Welfare Society concept is the desire it cherishes to remove the pressure and the oppression burdened on the people by the Welfare State concept. Often, the powerful and centralized states are being manoeuvred by small power groups. The latter also control the communication media and the national economy. Exploiting the modern communication media and harping on the mysterious virtues of an economic style which the majority of the people are too poor to adopt, they implant a delusive faith and a craving in their conscience for that Utopian Social Order. In the long run, not only the common people but even those who play their game end up as victims of this communication fraud.

They become capable of hooking up even the self-supporting village economic units which provide the

basic needs of the people, on to the centralized commercial Economic machinery as its subsidiary cog wheels and thereby yoke up the entire community to an unjust multi-national political economy. Let alone the Welfare States of the capitalist bloc, even those of the Socialist bloc now find it difficult to extricate themselves from this vicious politico-economic velocity.

The Welfare Society concept proposed by Sarvodaya is a novel politico economic tendency that progresses, sheltering the fetters and limitations imposed by the Capitalist as well as the Socialist brand of the Welfare State Concept. This decisive task is being accomplished by the very people's groups that get organized within their cultural value systems, basic and secondary needs and community organizations. Subsequently, the tertiary needs will evolve according to the needs and aspirations of the people's participatory structures and not with the ulterior motive of safeguarding the privileges of a privileged few.

People's Action Processes

Within a period of about three decades, we have gradually propagated this Welfare Society Concept in about eight thousand villages in Sri Lanka. We have identified and introduced diverse strategies and methodologies capable of translating this concept into a people's activity process, to diverse age groups from the child to the adult. This includes strategical processes and programmes in which all age groups can get organized in activity. While attention has already been focussed on the short-falls of the existing law, we have cleared the way for the people to open their own doors into the possibilities of acting for their own advantage, getting themselves incorporated as societies within the existing legal frame. The special feature of the Sarvodaya Development Education effort had been to make it possible to enlighten the people on a community awareness with regard to the existing social order along with the advantages and disadvantages that would accrue to the people therefrom, as well as the desired social order with its merits and demerits.

Crisis Control

Viciousness of the political economy does not necessarily arise from the contradictions that are evident in the political and economic field. At some stage, the manipulations of this machinery use their communication instrument and make it believe that the so-called democracy that they only enjoy is the common messiah of the entire people and that the free economy from which they only derive relatively large benefits is the common guardian of all the people. At such times the rulers declare that the Emergency Regulations, Prevention of Terrorism Acts, the use of State and Military Powers, etc, are nothing but timely steps taken for public security and the preservation of democracy and economic welfare. The privileged manipulators of the political economy also think of keeping down the common man passive and docile by using ingenious devices such as exhibiting a bloated economic productivity and a make-believe prosperous market with luxury items and goodies imported on loans and gratuitous donations, and also other strategies to convince the people that there is social peace so that they may forget the common fear of losing the security of life and the right of making democratic protests. Because of these, the common man misses the opportunity of experiencing the true viciousness of the political economy. This however, is an ephemeral phenomenon.

Vicious Situations

Malnutrition is on the increase; Literacy is decreasing; Suicides increase; Crime and corruption are rampant. The farmer, the artisan and the labourer who toil by the sweat of the brow for an honest living enriches the intermediary frauds.

Greater time in the Universities is consumed by strikes and protests than in the pursuit of knowledge. Unprecedented crimes and criminal reactions are recorded in those quarters. Young boys and girls of school going age are engaged in armed struggles, invincible by national forces or those of a major world power. We have to realize that at the bottom

of all these frustrations is the political economy and that all other external manifestations are only the external repercussions of the same. Hence, what has to be changed is the politico-economic structure.

A Fine Opportunity

Sarvodaya is committed to changing the existing social order through a non-violent revolutionary process. If so, it is imperative that we should channel our economic activities along the objective of a new political economy. While the civil administration is staggering in many regions, it has collapsed almost totally in two provinces. This is a fine opportunity to plant the seed of a new political economy at the level of the People. However, since the existing system has not totally collapsed, and no alternative civil administration has yet been built, Sarvodaya has to face the challenge of being in between and helping the people to identify new velocities, winning over public confidence and enlisting their co-operation.

Sarvodaya Economic Policies

The mixed economy spoken of by the Capitalist economists is a blend of the state and the private sector which no longer shows any sign of life in the aforementioned regions. While their lips speak of a mixed economy, their minds are pre-occupied with large scale economic activities at national level. What attracts our first attention is to involve village communities in the identification of human and natural resources available within their village confines and their utilization in production activities for the satisfaction of their basic needs and thereby to direct the village economy along an independent path. If by any chance the privileged groups stand in the way of removing the obstacles hindering that path of non violent development processes and legal amendments, they should be prepared to face an anarchical situation in which life gets destroyed violently. That will be the end result if an unjust political

economy refuses to turn towards justice non-violently. I would like to elucidate a few policies we should follow in such an eventuality.

1. To direct our villages towards a course of spiritual, moral, cultural and social development through an integrated community development exercise on to a strong alternative politico-economic tendency.
2. To give priority to a production process that would lead to an active development in the standard of living and supply the basic needs at community level.
3. To organize villages into clusters and to scientifically implement development exercises which supply the Basic and Secondary Human Needs and to educate the rural community on the strategies adopted by the external market to invade the rural folk to thrust their goods on them.
4. To organise the production, distribution and consumption in the Sarvodaya villages and village clusters formally, at regional and district levels so that they could effectively confront the onslaughts of the violent and capitalist commercial economy, invading them from without, and to build an economic cover through that to protect the common man.
5. To expand this alternate economic process gradually up to national and international levels in such a way as to make possible the emergence of self-reliance, collectiveness, self-sufficiency and nation-hood.
6. In every step taken, to act according to the principles of supplying of needs, increasing the incomes of the least income earners, supplying employment opportunities, utilization of appropriate technology, enhancement of people's managerial skills, adoption of a simple and unobstrusive life style, eschewing of affluence, arresting of wastage and heeding environmental and health protection.
7. To be out of party and power politics and to use facilities forthcoming only from state finance – institutional and donor agency resources that make less profits and give higher dividends to poor societies.

8. In promoting this tendency, to make the maximum use of human and structural resources that have evolved through Sarvodaya, completing a gradual building process of three decades.
9. While it is necessary to make use of the trained external human labour, new technology and management in Sarvodaya economic activities, to be always mindful that they are being built not for a just and people's economy as we envisage, and to utilize them after subjecting them to the necessary attitudinal and methodical change, and,
10. In establishing linkages for foreign assistance, foreign resources and foreign economic relations, to keep aloof from the current unilateral, colonial economic attitudes and structures and to do it only in such a way as to promote a bilateral relationship of mutual equality.

We should not assume that by observing the aforementioned policies we could change the present unjust political economy over-night. However, what we need is to divert the attention of the people towards a new political economy, to act as stimulants through the economic processes we are engaged in, and to inaugurate practical processes that would attract the attention of Sarvodaya as well as the external political and other organizations for a radical and non-violent revolutionary chage in the economy.

Through Community Development to an Economic Process

The community development processes that we have launched in eight thousand communities with a participation of about three million people should be the basis of our national economic breakthrough. Selecting 5,000 villages out of this, we implement our Life-line programmes. Generally, it is only when a village reaches the 4th stage having gone through the stages of mental and social institutionalization that we make an investment in it for economic activities. However, without assuming that that is an inflexible fact, if in any community, the required basic factors have been completed, and if resources could be mobilized, and if such

a project is deemed to promote employment opportunities and directly raise the income levels of a poor rural or urban community, we should not hesitate to support them to start an economic project under their own responsibility. If we are to conclude that before starting economic activities in each of these villages, they should have received training at our Sarvodaya Management Institute, it will take a couple of decades for us to launch economic activities in all these villages. We should not commit that mistake. Economic activities are an indispensably important aspect of community development.

Children's Savings

Presently, the number of children involved in our Children's Savings Service is about a hundred and fifty thousand. It is imperative that we should improve this service as a Savings Service alone, even in future. The end result of this should be the improvement of these children's savings which they start during their pre-schooling age – and continue uninterruptedly as a safe fund that supports the children in their higher education. If the manager in charge of this section and his staff act with foresight, this Children's Fund could be improved as a Child Education Bank in the near future. Then the children who possess its membership can withdraw money from this fund for their higher education. The Section should prepare a programme for the purpose of obtaining external support to fatten this fund as well as to release loans without danger. The sublime feeling that arise in the children that right from their childhood they are the members of a national movement that provides economic security for their education will further enthuse them to learn. It also could contribute to the resurgence of their creativity from their very childhood through practical activities like Children's Home Gardens and Children's Fairs.

Exchange of Goods and Projects

Diverse types of productions take place in Sarvodaya villages. The biggest hurdle of the village producer is the

market. For those who are involved in service, from the Gramadana level up to the District level, it is possible to exchange these goods according to needs and thereby to issue a fair price to the village producer for his products as well as to levy a reasonable service charge to cover their expenses. This type of activities will be the beginning of extensive economic exchange systems.

Community Workers Project

From various sources such as the decentralized budget of the central Government, the integrated rural development projects and other governmental as well as non-governmental institutions, money is being allocated for the construction of roads, culverts, wells, toilets, minor scale tanks and irrigational devices, water supplying schemes, houses, public buildings, etc., etc., to satisfy the basic and secondary needs of the rural communities for their well-being.

Sarvodaya Rural Technical Services that operate at District level obtain the advice and direction of the technicians as well as money from the Village Sarvodaya Shramadana Societies and complete these tasks. This too is a means of retaining within the village, the money flowing there from outside and making it to circulate within the village itself. This bestows on the village a number of benefits such as arresting the infiltration of money allocated to the village into the hands of the intermediaries, qualitative accomplishment of the task without being guided by a profiteering motive, the professional training the village youths receive during project implementation and the ability the village develops to maintain the project as a follow-up programme, to name a few. This gives the villagers a practical experience in economic enterprise.

Agricultural Loan Facilities

Sarvodaya Shramadana Societies prepare the procedure to issue concessionary agricultural loans as an important component in community development. We should explore

more and more methodologies to provide this service according to finance institutional facilities available in different regions. We should spare no pains in enthusing the institutions to provide funds with confidence in the Movement, so that loan facilities could be made available with a reasonable interest rate. In like manner, we should also provide assistance under our integrated development services to those who are engaged in cottage industries, small industries, fishing activities and small scale trade.

SEEDS (Sarvodaya Economic Enterprises Development Service)

SEEDS is a special service constituted under a special committee appointed by the Sarvodaya Executive Council to formally organize the Sarvodaya Economic sections. This service was started with a number of objectives, such as, to maintain formally and lucratively the income generating projects presently implemented at Headquarters and District levels, to inaugurate new projects to generate the income required by the Movement for its activities, and to start new income generating projects at village and regional levels to improve the income of the weak communities and to provide management training required by all these sections. Taken as a whole, SEEDS is vested with the responsibility of preparing various economic activities required for the purpose of propagating the Sarvodaya Economic Philosophy islandwide and to launch a new economic tendency through active projects.

As a very important section under the SEEDS is organized the Sarvodaya Management Training Institute. Management can be interpreted as the science and art in which leadership avails itself of organizational activities while striving towards an objective. The progress or the retardation of the Sarvodaya Movement is determined on the quality of its organizational nature. Since Sarvodaya is an islandwide Movement based on small village and urban communities, the target of Sarvodaya Management Training too is those very same communities.

The theories and processes of management cannot be transferred from one culture to another in toto. The majority of modern management theories and methods are those cribbed from the Western management technology. What we require is a management technology that fits into the needs, and structure of the rural community. This has to be evolved by us ourselves, and that evolution has to be in accordance with the identity of the rural communities and their social and cultural background.

As I mentioned earlier, these activities have to take place under the realities of the existing situations and especially within a violent and unjust environment and at a time when the innocent are forced to pay their price wedged in between the struggle of two power groups at extremes. We see no alternative way other than a non-violent revolutionary one. According to our might, we are laying a strong people's participatory politico-economic infrastructure along that way. Even a march of 10 miles has to be started with one step forward.

(Culled from the lecture delivered by Dr. A.T. Ariyaratne, the Leader of Sarvodaya at the Sarvodaya Management Training Institute on Saturday, the 7th November 1987.)

11.

The Challenge of Continuity in Community Awakening – The Realization of Sarvodaya Objectives in The Present Context of Sri Lanka

On behalf of my colleagues, Harsha Navaratne, Field Operations Director of Sarvodaya and Dulan de Silva, the Chief Executive of Sarvodaya Economic Enterprises Development Services and myself, I would like to thank Dr Sjef Theunis and all of you, his colleagues at NOVIB, for the warm welcome given to us.

If I may use a local village expression in Sri Lanka, in the field of development partnership, NOVIB and Sarvodaya are like the tree and its bark. They are inseparable and therefore have come to share a common destiny, or, if I may put it in less deterministic language, they are progressing towards a common destination. Therefore, it is not necessary for me to elaborate with long exchanges of words of solidarity as we have amply demonstrated it in shared action for over one and a half decades now.

We are fortunate that like a healthy tree with well dispersed branches, sustaining and supporting the totality of its functions, CIDA, NORAD, HELVETAS, OXFAM and ITDG also have organically cohesed with the NOVIB – Sarvodaya fraternity, helping to bear sweet-smelling flowers and rich fruit, giving shade and sustenance to several millions of people in our homeland, Sri Lanka. I would extend to them also our affection and deep respect for enabling us to be in a position to talk about Sarvodaya and her past achievements, future aspirations and her trials and tribulations, by the commitments they have made in the past.

I may fail in my duty if I do not mention the originator of the idea of having this pre-consortium meeting in the Hague. I mention here Peter de Haan of NOVIB, who has the great virtue of coming up with right ideas at most appropriate moments. The now much popular expression "the Sarvodaya Life Line activities" is another innovation by him made jointly with his prede lesson Peter Van Zanvoort at a previous meeting we held in Sri Lanka.

Currently, the Sarvodaya Movement is functioning through its thirtieth year. The principal objective of the Movement

is the re-awakening of man and society for peace, justice and happiness. This awakening, which begins with the human personality, family unit and the village or urban community, is organic in nature, having its spiritual, moral, cultural, social, economic and political dimensions. Numerous programmes and projects that are developed and implemented by Sarvodaya, in essence, contribute to this total awakening process. The bedrock on which all these practical manifestations of the Sarvodaya ideology and objectives rests is the participation of people - by and large the non-elitist people.

Sarvodaya always looked at participation as a continuing process at all levels and in every sphere of human activity that affect the lives of the participants. In other words, people's right to participate in defining their goals and realizing them in practice, was recognised from the very inception of the Movement. Of course they could only begin this process at their own grass-roots level.

Sarvodaya did not believe in getting people to participate in activities not decided upon by themselves. The kind of solicited participation in programmes decided upon by political or bureaucratic elite, may, at best, succeed in mobilizing people by offering them various piecemeal incentives. But, that kind of mobilization does not lead to the organisation of people for a more equitable kind of total development. Sarvodaya always aimed at organising people based on goals and programmes which they themselves defined, planned and understood, and of course, with the help of those who had the appropriate technological knowledge. It is a kind of organised and intelligible participation by people.

Today, after three decades of such participatory experiences, beginning with Shramadana Camps, 8000 rural and urban communities out of 23,000 in Sri Lanka, have achieved a level of nation – wide participation across the country. From the village to a cluster of five villages, from four clusters or more at a divisional level to ten to twenty

divisions at a district level, from three to five districts at a provincial level to nine provinces at a national level, Sarvodaya has built up a co-ordinated mechanism for people's participation. (Table 1)

This lateral, participatory, organisational network is one of the key elements of the Sarvodaya organisational structure today and is also an important national reality which cannot be overlooked by any governmental or non-governmental group, interested in nation building.

8000 villages with 5600 of them belonging to a planned Life Line Strategy of Development, 1120 village clusters, 300 divisional groups, 30 district level structures and 9 provincial level organisations, necessarily have given rise to a certain functional leadership. These leaders are indigenous in origin, experienced in community organisation and are committed to the Sarvodaya ideology. This is a second factor that cannot be overlooked.

Within the legal, financial and technical constraints, the above participatory groups and leaders have an integrated development plan which they implement in spite of all the political and social unrest and violent conflicts prevailing in the country today.

The continuity of the Sarvodaya programmes is ensured due to these three factors of organised participation, tested leadership and people centred planning and implementation.

Before I go any further, I must mention here a fourth factor. When you think of the total development process in a country, and the impact which non-elitist people can make on such developments, it is dependent on the degree to which a critical mass in participatory development is created. This critical mass of people's participation should generate sufficient momentum to counter balance inappropriate, top-down, development nourished by large (mostly foreign) capital inputs, high technology and communication thrusts and most often, accompanied by

deliberate subversion of hereditary rights of people to their traditional homes, customs and technologies. While Sarvodaya had no illusions about the need to create such a critical mass, yet beyond getting people's participation, leadership building and grass-roots planning, it had no control over the much required other inputs such as capital. This is where the donor organisations led by NOVIB became critically important to us.

Unless the partner organisations look at Sarvodaya in its proper context, relative to the social, environmental and ecological costs of top-down development, it is not possible for Sarvodaya by itself to generate the much needed, non-violent, community awakening force to give a more sustainable direction to the country as a whole.

Sarvodaya could have concentrated easily on a development programme in only a 1000 villages or so, in health, nutrition, sanitation, literacy and so on. But such a course of action could never have paved the way to bring about an empowerment on the part of the less privileged people to influence the national course of events, which in turn, influenced their day-to-day life. In other words, Sarvodaya by its very definition and objectives is a Movement dedicated to bring about a total non-violent revolution. Sarvodaya is different from localised social welfare and development groups who do not have such broad social objectives. In fact, most of them in the present situation of social unrest in the country, have become either totally extinct or ineffective even in their own small localities of operation.

Coming back to Sarvodaya, I should admit that while we have created a modest people's participatory mass, it is not yet developed into a critical mass strong enough to counteract the ever increasing tempo of violence and counter violence both personalized and institutionalized, prevailing in Sri Lanka today.

What appears to me to be the most urgent need of the hour is to risk a big jump to reach the critical mass. In

empirical terms, take the Life Line programmes into twice the number of villages within the shortest possible time. You may ask me, 'Have you got the capacity to do this?' I would reply, 'Yes, we have the moral, the organisational, the leadership and the participatory capacity of the people. The management and technological capacity, we can develop. We have the financial management capacity now. What we lack is an almost 100% increase in our financial inputs. This is a challenge that applies more to our partners, than to us.'

Now, let me divert your attention to the national scene of Sri Lanka as I see it now. In spite of over 50,000 Indian troops being deployed in the Northern and Eastern Provinces of Sri Lanka, an end to the violent confrontations in the North and East is not in sight. The presence of Indian troops has created other serious problems to the civilian population in the North and East and a new political dimension to the country as a whole. For the past seven months, there has been a rapid degeneration of the law and order situation in the rest of the country, also. Bank robberies, disappearances of people, murders and violent confrontations between armed groups have been reported almost daily. Universities are closed most of the time and student unrest remains unsolved. Functioning of democratic institutions and processes such as elections, public meetings, and freedom of expression are daily getting curtailed. The cultural degeneration that is taking place is creating a great concern in the minds of people who cherish healthy values. In this unsettled social climate, civil administration and economic development institutions are increasingly becoming less functional.

Almost all the communities in the country have more or less a propotional share of victims of war and other forms of violence. Even relief and rehabilitation activities cannot any longer be managed by small non-governmental groups. Sarvodaya may be an exception because while it is small and effective at the grass-roots, it is at the same time big

and wide spread because of its nation-wide co-ordinating network.

In a socio-political climate of this nature, the best guarantee for the survival of community in as many places as possible, are the three factors of participation, leadership and planned action I referred to earlier. In spite of the general breakdown of civilian administration, these communities can continue to survive and make progress in comparative peace. But if they are to influence the disturbed, total social milieu, then they need more social empowerment. It is in this context that the Sarvodaya inputs through supporting services in addition to Life Line Activities become necessary.

In Sri Lanka today, over 3/4 of a million people are refugees due to the past five years of disturbances. Besides these there are staggering numbers of nearly 60% of the people who are not affected by disturbances living below the poverty line. There are the malnourished, the disabled, the blind and the diseased. Through the Sarvodaya specialized services such as the Relief and Rehabilitation Services, Suwa Setha Services, Rural Technical Services, Savings and Credit Services and Sarvodaya Economic Enterprises Development Services, every attempt is made to reach these communities and help them to awaken themselves.

As these participatory organisational activities as well as specialised supporting services reach the people irrespective of their caste, race, religion, language or political affiliations, Sarvodaya is increasingly becoming a reconciliatory movement, without calling itself as such, through its development activities. The very fact that diverse groups of people can come together in large numbers as one human family, proves that a nation-wide psychological and organisational infrastructure leading to peaceful co-existence is being developed.

In the same way as Sarvodaya helps a village community to awaken to its full potential, going through the psychological infrastructure building, social infrastructure building and

institutionalization for economic and social development, this kind of unifying process leads to other bottom-up, nation-wide processes. But, whether it is possible for these processes to consummate politically and constitutionally at the national level is a question that remains to be answered as we go on. I hesitate to speculate on this until such time I am personally convinced that we have succeeded in buliding a critical mass of people's participation which will enable us to play a critical role of bringing about social peace and justice.

However, I am sure that you will be interested to know the potential which the Sarvodaya Movement has to bring about such a consummation and if we decide to do it, how we propose to set about it.

Firstly, I must reiterate the need to build the participatory critical mass by doubling our area of Life Line operations, so that we can help the masses to continue on a path of self-development, satisfying their basic human needs, for even bare survival under the existing trying conditions. The advantage Sarvodaya has over power-oriented, party political movments is its capacity to provide a practical response to the challenge of day-to-day physical and psychological survival of people, in an organised and independent manner. The significance of this capacity was amply demonstrated when the Sarvodaya oraganisational infrastructure in the Northern Province was fully geared to provide almost instantaneous emergency relief to tens of thousands of people rendered refugees when the Indian Peace Keeoing Forces went into operation in the Province. I must mention here with deep appreciation the quick response we received from NOVIB for emergency aid.

In a less extensive way the same kind of immediate relief and rehabilitation programmes have reached the affected people in the South also. This capacity is lacking in political organisations, both legal and underground, as well as in governmental organisations. Therefore, Sarvodaya operations were not hindered by any of the contending groups or

institutions. Why I am stressing the need to extensify our organisational and physical infrastructure capacity to other needed areas, is to retain this advantage which I believe, is a pre-requisite for a non-violent, economic and political transformation leading to peace and justice.

The second area in which I propose to consolidate our influence is democracy and law. In this instance I am thinking more of the preservation of fundamental human rights of the people, under the law. During the past five years, there was ample publicity given around the world to the violation of fundamental human rights in the North and East of Sri Lanka, using emergency powers and taking cover under the Prevention of Terrorism Act. However, although today there are similar reports of the same kind of thing happening in the South, as well as reports of serious allegations of continued excesses on the civilian population by the Indian Peace Keeping Forces in the North, there seems to be a strange silence on the part of normally vociferous Human Rights groups at this time. Is this silence due to some kind of fear of counter-militant, extra-legal forces who exterminate anyone who speak up against this kind of atrocities? We do not know. Whatever it is, what is important is to do whatever that is possible to uphold people's rights under the law, even within the existing system of administration of justice, whatever be its shortcomings.

Sarvodaya has extensified its Legal Aid Services to meet this challenge. Today the Sarvodaya Legal Aid Workers are visiting police stations, remand jails, homes of missing persons and locations of places where brutalities were committed by unknown persons and assist the victims by bailing them out of remand jails, retaining lawyers and looking after the dependents of the victims. Furthermore, with the participation of the judiciary, lawyers, prison officials, law enforcement officers and community leaders, seminars, educational programmes and publication of material to educate the public, are carried out.

This is a programme which will directly benefit people not only who are victimised at the moment, but also the community in general. It will help them to be conscious of their human rights under the law and also will bring responsible, non-political leaders, who will be made socially conscious and active, into the Movement.

Thirdly, as a result of political uncertainties and growing insecurity on the part of politically non-aligned government administrators, the entire network of macro-development plans is getting stalled before it can reach the people. Frustration, passivity and disinterestedness take hold of these people. In them, Sarvodaya finds not only a skilled human resource but also an access to unutilized financial and material resources for community upliftment. Sarvodaya, while keeping aloof from the ruling party machinery and other power political organisations, is re-orienting, whenever possible, the local governmental machinery to continue to serve the people.

The community of Buddhist monks in Sri Lanka is the fourth category of people's leaders, whom we are mobilizing, organising and training for total transformation of our society into a more righteous one. Knowing first hand a vast majority of Buddhist monks in Sri Lanka, we do not share the much propagandised impression that they are a communal and sectarian group. There may be a few among them, as in all other religious groups, who for some reasons, become pawns in the hands of power-hungry politicians. But, the vast majority are reasonable human beings who will not side with intolerance and injustice.

In the past seventeen years, with very little financial inputs, we have organised about 20% of a total of 20,000 monks in Sri Lanka. However, we lack the resources to extensify their involvement at Divisional, District and National levels. They are a very important segment of the leadership in the country to re-establish better understanding among the different communities in Sri Lanka as well as

for the general improvement of their physical and spiritual quality of life.

A fifth area in which Sarvodaya has to improve its quality and extent is its communication outfit. While Sarvodaya has, through its various programmes, reached a large segment of the population by direct contact, this has not been followed-up with an extensive information and educational programmme. The Sarvodaya Newspaper, publications and pamphlets, a weekly radio broadcast and the screening of its few films are all worthwhile. But, if the Movement is to, in effect, reach the national community with its message for an alternative society, then it is imperative that at least in the Sinhala and Tamil media, Sarvodaya should possess more communication tools at her disposal. A daily, or at least a weekly newspaper, a wide variety of books and magazines, several new films, widespread usage of the audio and video media and encouragement and support for popular plays and other cultural creations, are some of the improvements which come to my mind in this connection.

Once the above sectors are developed and consolidated, which I think, can be done in the short run, then we can direct our attention to broader, macro issues such as, total political and economic change in the country as envisaged by the Sarvodaya philosophy and objectives. Of course, one of the first things that has to be achieved is a confrontational dialogue with the political and economic leaders of the country. At this moment, the dialogue is marginal and ineffective because these groups are either in power or live with the expectation of getting into power. As such, it is rather condescending on their part to come into a dialogue with a participatory people's movement whose feet are solidly planted in the ground. On the other hand, once when the Movement is in possession of the critical mass needed for the change and the other supporting ingredients are there, then only will they take the Movement seriously and perhaps will begin to see the sanity of our approach for national survival, peace and development.

As a preparatory action for such a constructive dialogue, Sarvodaya has already taken two major steps.

Firstly, an independent team of scholars have been assigned to develop and carry out a continuing impact study of the Movement, taking all aspects of our work into consideration.

Secondly, another group of 15 independent specialists have been selected to work with some senior sarvodaya personnel as a national investigating committee to find out what went wrong in the country during the past 40 years and how best we could develop a ten-year National Reconstruction Plan, from 1990 to year 2000, to correct the past mistakes and bring it to the attention of the whole country. I am not going to elaborate on the work of these two groups, but I think that it is appropriate to mention a word about the Investigating Committee, which has been in operation for nearly three months now.

A very distinguished and respected Professor heads this Investigating Committee. The Study is done in five broad sectors, namely, Democracy and Law, the Ethnic Problem, Education and Youth, National Economy and Cultural Degeneration. Five Sub-Committees are collecting all the data and have prepared five Statements. Each of these Statements will be presented to about 60 persons coming from various levels in society and their responses also will be incorporated into the Study. Then, taking all the findings as a whole, a series of interviews, workshops and seminars will be held to work out an indicative plan, embracing all aspects of national life. It is expected that this plan of action will be ready by the end of 1988, in time for it to be presented at the 32nd Sarvodaya Annual General Meeting. Once it is accepted by the general body, the year 1989 will be used to take it to the people. Whatever feasible interim actions that are revealed to be worthy of immediate implementation, will be taken up for action by the Movement even before the full plan is ready. This exercise also needs your support, if we are to accomplish a satisfactory job.

I think that I have now talked enough. I believe that you got the message which I was trying to convey. It is very important that all of you look at and try to comprehend our approach in the mental framework of a person living in a socio-political milieu like ours. Then only can you appreciate the reality as we perceive it and possibilities as we conceive them. By and large this has always been the attitude displayed by our principal resource partner, NOVIB and other partners who joined us recently. As we require continued support to awaken ourselves, it is imperative that you too should possess a total understanding about ourselves and what motivates us to go the way we are going.

In conclusion, I would like to mention to you that today - the 4th of February - is our 40th Independence Day. What a coincidence it is that I had to speak today before you on a subject most relevant to the freedom of all our people in Sri Lanka. So, may I thank our host, NOVIB, and all the friends who have come from distant lands, for their patience with me. Now, I am open to any questions from you.

(Talk delivered by Dr. A. T. Ariyaratne at the Pre-Consortium Meeting held at the NOVIB Headquarters in Den Haag, the Netherlands, on 4th Febraury, 1988)

12.

Total Social Transformation Through People Centred Development – Current Trends in Philanthropy in the Developing World

At this important Conference, I represent an alliance of non-governmental organisations operating in twelve countries in Asia. This alliance is known as Approtech Asia and its co-ordinating office is based in Manila in the Philippines.

The member organisations of Approtech Asia work with rural and urban communities in their countries to improve their conditions of living in all its aspects, using appropriate technologies. The country organisation to which I belong is the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka.

As the theme of my talk, I have selected 'Total Social Transformation Through People Centred Development', in relation to the broader subject under discussion, 'Current Trends in Philanthropy in the Developing World'.

Voluntary People's Organisations basing themselves on self-reliance and self-help have existed in the field of development for a much longer period of time than official government development programmes. For nearly three decades, governments with the support of multi-lateral and bi-lateral aid, have indulged themselves in large scale development exercises. They have invested large sums of monies and commonly used highly advanced technologies to carry out these macro projects. On the other hand, people centred non-governmental organisations have, through conviction and necessity, carried out small scale, need-based development projects with traditional or appropriate technologies. Undoubtedly both have contributed to change the prevailing conditions under which people lived, with varying degrees of success.

However, when one looks back at both these development approaches, a number of clear trends can be observed. Some of these contrasted in sharp terms are:

In terms of results, most of the capital intensive, large scale, expensive projects have fallen short of expectations and the gap between the rich and the poor has increased. Social costs have been very heavy. Environmental and

ecological damages likewise, have also been very heavy. Sometimes, cultures which have existed for a long time have been extremely disturbed almost in an irretrievable manner. i.e., large scale, capital intensive development by its very nature, requires highly centralised control. Democratic controls are then weakened, which can lead to repressive government. People's participation in the politics and economics of their countries is rendered a sham. When such a right to self-determination is taken away, more and more violent forms of social change, terrorism and counter-terrorism replace the peaceful mechanisms of social change. Also national debts have mounted to unprecedented proportions, increasing the dependency of the poorer nations on the rich ones.

While tremendous, top-down, imposed changes have been going on through macro development projects, equally vigorous grass-roots movements have been growing among the people as a response to the challenges that they have had to meet in their day-to-day life in the face of this changing environment. This has been through sheer necessity. In other words, low-profile, micro-development processes aimed at a sustainable life-style have been going on under the leadership of non-governmental organisations, alongside the big development programmes.

The macro development projects mentioned earlier have been planned, financed and executed by powerful political authorities, highly qualified economists, technologists and administrators, who have strongly believed in the Western industrialised model of society as the answer to the problems of poverty, hunger and powerlessness. On the other hand, the latter forms of development have been initiated by spiritually or intellectually motivated charismatic leaders with a deep sympathy for the problems of their people, who have had a different social vision which has been rooted more in indigenous cultures than in imported models. So their approach has been more simple, more sustainable and has always relied on the maximum participation, organisation and upliftment of people themselves, to build a kind of

society which they themselves have thought was the best for themselves.

In the Asian region which I represent, some of the non-governmental organisations which have been in the vanguard of the people's development movement are, the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee, Gandhian inspired movements in India such as the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi in Kerala, Bhagawantula Trust in Andra Pradesh, Centre for Science and Environment in new Delhi, Savar Gonoshasthaya Kendra in Bangladesh, Barangay Technology Centre, Manila Community Services, Philippines Business for Social Progress, Philippines Centre for Appropriate Technology & Training, Instut Masyarakat Berhad in Malaysia, Population and Community Development Association and SVITA Foundation in Thailand, Yayasan Dian Desa and Yayasan Indonesia Sejahtera in Indonesia, Technonet Asia in Singapore, Community Development Services and the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement in Sri Lanka.

From their small beginnings, these movements have evolved into more sophisticated development organisations, demonstrating in practice an alternative path to development, where the main actors of the process have become the intended beneficiaries themselves. Sometimes they have found common ground with governments and at other times they have had to face immense hardships from political and bureaucratic development thrusts, often deliberate and vindictive. However, now around the world the importance and the usefulness of non-governmental approaches have been proved beyond all doubt by the achievements of these organisations.

There have also been certain innovations and specializations that have taken place such as certain non-governmental organisations concentrating on environmental, ecological and social issues. Yet, as a whole they all believe in the need for a total, integrated global approach to development. Perhaps a good example for such a holistic development

approach is the organisation to which I belong, the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka. I believe that the philosophy and the practice of this Movement will generally echo the values and aspirations of the non-governmental sector as a whole.

'Sarvodaya' means the 'Awakening of All' and 'Shramadana' means the 'Sharing of Labour and other Resources'. The Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka believes that nothing short of a total social transformation through people centred development can create a society where hunger, disease, poverty, injustice and violence can be eradicated. The change should be total in the sense that a spiritual, moral, cultural, social, economic and political transformation should take place simultaneously. This change must take place at two levels, i.e.;

(a). Individuals, families, village and urban communities should start an integrated process of self-awakening and self-development.
(b). Clusters of these village and urban communities should get organised upto the provincial and national levels so that people's values and aspirations will be accounted for and reflected in national policy making.

There are 23,000 villages in Sri Lanka. Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement is active in 8,000 of these villages. They are evenly distributed to include all racial, religious and other groups. These village communities decide on their own free will to pool their labour and other resources to satisfy one or more of their basic needs progressively and according to a planned programme of action they agree upon. With Sarvodaya guidance, they classify their needs under environment, water, clothing, food, housing, health-care, communication, energy, education, spiritual and cultural needs and they try to relate these basic human needs to different social groups in the village such as pre-school children, children of school going age, youths, mothers, farmers and others. Social formations are made of each of these groups and a kind of social infrastructure

is laid to implement their agreed plans of action in an organised way. After some time they get organised as a village society so that as a legal entity they can undertake social and economic activities for their own self-development. Clusters of such villages also get organised to co-operate in collective action that will bring benefit to the communities.

The national Sarvodaya Shramadana Organisation has established over 300 Divisional and district Centres to help these village communities to acquire the skills necessary to satisfy their basic needs using various appropriate technologies. The communities are assisted in obtaining whatever governmental extension services that are available to them. Also small inputs of capital which will be needed for their work is provided. Because they are organised as a national body, they are also capable of overcoming many localised social, political and economic injustices that have become a part of the daily life in most poor societies.

The specialised services that these communities need are many and varied. In the fields of nutrition, healthcare, communicable diseases, housing, sanitation, water supply, community education, human rights, communication, legal aid services and so on, the Movement has developed appropriate and low-cost mechanisms that directly reach the people and help them to awaken themselves to these challenges and meet them satisfactorily with their own efforts.

However, the biggest constraint in this kind of people centred development is the lack of monetary resources. The irony is that there is plenty of funds available for development. But, sadly most of it goes elsewhere for gigantic prestige projects, usually involving the government, where only a privileged few end up with the benefits of the colossal expenditure. The remaining funds are shared out amongst non-governmental organisations of varying sizes and qualities. Organisations such as Sarvodaya, which are large and serve a very large number of people can end up obtaining disproportionately little of these funds. Other organisations

which consist mostly of very talented project proposal writers can end up obtaining a disproportionately large part of the available money. This is a sad fact, but it is true. For instance, per person served, Sarvodaya obtains easily the least amount of outside money amongst the better known non-governmental organisations in Sri Lanka. So to better serve the great numbers of poor people on whose behalf we work, we need the unstinted support of philanthropic individuals and organisations around the world.

What is needed is a direct link between individuals, groups and organisations in poor societies with those in more affluent societies. Philanthropy need not be considered as a privilege only the materially affluent people possess to indulge in charitable and patronising relationships with the materially poor. On the other hand philanthropy should be considered as an attitude of mind that both the rich and the poor can develop together for mutual human awakening.

Such a human awakening cannot be realized in practice unless the affluent and the privileged demonstrate their honesty of purpose in three ways. Firstly, they must voluntarily give up wasteful styles of living, primarily by coming to realize the trap of greed that can never be satisfied. Secondly, they must immediately share a part of their wealth to enable the poor to generate enough income to meet their minimum needs. Thirdly, they should take all possible steps to change structural injustices that keep the vast majority of people in the world politically and economically powerless and poor. Once they give a lead in this direction and establish their credibility, the vast spiritual and cultural resources that materially poorer sectors of our communities still possess will get released to take us towards our much sought after global community, living in peace and brotherhood.

The poor offer to the rich the opportunity to learn to share, without which quality no society or individual can ever be truly happy. In Western society there is much spiritual despair, loneliness, alienation and unhappiness. On

the other hand the West considers itself the pinnacle of all civilization. This attitude is not conducive to internally generated change that can lead Western society on a new path by giving of its material bounty to the poor. The West will find the spiritual release it yearns for, coming to it from the materially poor world.

In conclusion, I wish to emphasise again that most of the under-development in our countries is due to the wrong kind of development that has been imposed upon our people. This is why an ethos of development has not caught the people. What we need is not a greed-based approach to development but an approach that caters to the need of people to be fully human. We need human being centred improvements to the quality of life of people and not consumer-oriented, unsustainable, concrete cultures. We need development projects that sustain and enrich nature and not increased artificiality that alienates man from man and man from nature. We need highly decentralized decision making processes that enhance human dignity and not technocratised bureaucratic machinery which enslave people. Spiritually and materially, what we need is a total transformation of man and society where non-violence and justice will prevail.

Therefore, I believe that philanthropists and philanthropic organisations who are meeting here in Toronto, will bear these aspirations of the poorer communities in the world in mind when they design their co-operative efforts in future.

(Dr. A. T. ARIYARATNE is the Founder and President of the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of SRI LANKA. Address: Sarvodaya, 98, Rawatawatta Rd. Moratuwa Sri Lanka. He is also the Chairman of Approtech Asia based in Manila and Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Asian Institute of Rural Development based in Bangalore in India. This is the text of the speech Dr. Ariyaratne delivered at the World Congress on Philanthropy, METRO TORONTO CONVENTION CENTRE, TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA, 23-27th May 1988)

13.

Reaching the Unreached

I am most thankful to the organisers of the Third International Symposium on Public Health in Asia and the Pacific Region for inviting me to participate at this Symposium and speak on the theme "Reaching the Unreached".

I know I am among scientists and the cream of professionals in Asia and Pacific Region who are specializing in children's welfare and public health affairs. As far as I am concerned, I am neither a scientist nor a professional; but I am a friend of children, a firm believer in preventive health care, and an unqualified supporter of UNICEF and its present leader, Dr. James P. Grant. It is for these reasons that I accepted this invitation to be present here and contribute some thoughts to your deliberations.

UNICEF has promoted a Child Survival revolution in which all of us in the non-governmental organisations as well have participated. We have succeeded in some areas: but have failed in most areas. We have reached some people very successfully and have hardly reached others. Therefore, the theme selected for this symposium, namely, Reaching the Unreached, is very provocative and challenging.

As a principle, I always speak from my own experience. I am not an admirer of people who advocate and preach revolution to others without making sacrifices themselves and who do not show the changes they seek to make in society in their own lives. I believe that revolutionaries should do the revolution. A revolution once begun does not end. It has to continue. Under the leadership of Dr. Jim Grant UNICEF started a Child Survival Revolution and it should continue. I have always believed myself to be a non-violent revolutionary. From the time the Sarvodaya Movement in Sri Lanka was started, we have been active promoters of that non-violent revolution. Thoughts I share with you today are based on some of the experiences we gained while working for that revolution.

After all, what is a revolution when we relate it to Child Survival and Primary Health Care? Certainly it is an

integrated process catering to the needs of children in their families and their social milieu. This process has ideological, methodological and organisational components that seek to bring about a radical change for the better, on the conditions of the child. It is a revolution not only because of the novelty of its approach but also because its results affecting the well-being and survival of the child are brought about with the shortest possible consumption of time.

Expert knowledge on the subject is available to us. The simplest to the most sophisticated technology, to facilitate the transfer of that knowledge to wherever it is needed, is also available to us. There is no scarcity of structural arrangements from inter-governmental bodies to national governments to facilitate that knowledge reaching any nation in the world. However, it is common knowledge that we have not been able to reach all those whom we wanted to reach. That is why we are talking today about Reaching the Unreached.

Who are these, the unreached? Are they identical with the unreachable? Or are not they the ones who are reachable, but for some reason or the other, we have not been able to reach them. Still they are not the same as the unreachable. I believe there are some who are unreachable because I have had experience with such people in my child survival services. Perhaps, there may be a link more hidden than exposed between the unreached and the unreachable. It may also be that the unreachable are standing on our way when we try to reach the unreached to accomplish our Child Survival Revolution. Later I will explain who these unreachable people are.

The unreached, we are concerned with, are the poorest of the poor in the world whose basic survival needs are yet to be satisfied. For some time, we have been working towards the target to reach them all by the year 2000 as proposed by the Health For All objective of the WHO.

Health for All by the year 2000 and the Child Survival Revolution are two noble ideas which in fact merge into one

and the same lofty objective. Is there a guarantee that this ideal can be realised when we take into consideration the realities of our countries at the present time? Some of the countries in Asia and the Pacific after prolonged tumultuous times have settled down to seriously planning for the future and have managed to reach most of the unreached. Still other countries are going through chaotic times and there seems to be no certainty as to when they can have the peace of mind to seriously think about the fundamental question of child survival and health.

Sri Lanka is one of these most disturbed countries in the world today. Sri Lanka, the land of my birth and where I live and struggle to make others also live, has weakened its psycho-social roots within a matter of a decade. Values which were cherished by her people for over 25 centuries have been made ineffective in a matter of a few years. We, in Sri Lanka, I am grieved to say, are not heading towards Health for All but the towards Death for All by the year 2000 if we do not radically change our course now.

There was a time when Dr. James P. Grant himself paid tribute to Sri Lankan policy-makers for maintaining a comparatively high Physical Quality of Life Index in spite of low GDP growth rate, and per capita incomes. What he said then was true and I agreed with him at that time also, that our PQLI was high. But, I did not agree with him even then that the credit should go to the policy makers for that wonderful achievement. My disagreement with him at that time is justified today, when we helplessly observe and see to our dismay that the Physical Quality of Life Index is not only going down at a rapid rate, but we are also observing to our horror that dozens of human lives, physically and brutally, are being destroyed every day.

At least now let us get over this empirical myth that a high Physical Quality of Life Index had been achieved by the wise decisions of our policy makers. The truth is that it was the result of an indigenous, people-centered, cultural and developmental force that survived even 30 years into independence. What the planners did since independence

was to use all their western training, imported technology and managerial capitalism and technocratic socialism, to discredit that culture and indigenous development processes that poor communities protected even during colonial times. All they attempted to do was to bring about a modernisation which was more imitative of the west than relevant or sustainable to our realities. I can recollect in 1961 how a Sri Lankan ex-bureaucrat, turned development researcher, used all his Queen's English to ridicule the subsistance economy of our villages in favour of a market economy to modernise our people and industrialise our country.

They have succeeded beyond all their expectations and now the country is in the throes of not a simple bloody revolution but a totally anarchic situation as far as our rural areas are concerned. While the communication media – newspapers, the radio and the television – are informing the people about international cricket encounters, the demise of a millionairess, the birth of a royal baby and the death counts of the Indian Peace Keeping soldiers, Sri Lankan forces, Tamil and Sinhala Militants and Insurgents, who are killing one another, they are silent about a terrible famine that is in the offing in the North Central and the South Western parts of Sri Lanka. There are hardly any warning signals coming from the media or the leaders about this impending catastrophy.

Meanwhile, some international voluntary agencies serving children are said to be packing up and leaving. I do not know, who else will close shop. I also do not know how even UNICEF's structure with all its good ideas and technology can reach the children in those areas. The participants in this bloody conflict seems to have lost sight of the existence or usefulness of any humanizing or neutralising force who can intervene and even amidst fighting help the refugees, helplessly sandwiched children, women, and old and the sick to survive. In other words, a shortsighted planning job has been done by the managers of our country in such a manner that not even the reputed

UNICEF, the International Red Cross and other neutral groups have been left with any capacity to come to the areas of conflict.

Sri Lanka is not the first or the only country going through this kind of man-made tragedy. However, it is important that other countries in Asia and the Pacific Region take serious notice of this situation. What are the causes that have brought our country to this almost irretrievable path. In one word I can say the cause is not ignorance of the unreached but the indifference of the unreachable in our country – the decision-making elites of our country.

Please do not make a mistake. I am not talking of the unreached. I am talking of the unreachable. I said they are the elite in our society. I told you I am talking from my own experience and not from any theory. For 35 years we attempted to reach those unreachable elites to warn them that the day is not far off when the mal-nourished, the under-privileged, the socially depressed and the mentally frustrated will reach 'them', not with petitions and the begging bowl but with the very 'T56' and 'AK47' weapons which 'they' introduced into our country for their own protection from the people on whom they had imposed an unjust and unequal social, political, economic and legal system. On the other hand, in spite of these obstacles, we in Sarvodaya were able to reach as many as one third of the villages in our country and the people listened to us because first we listened to them. So with comparative safety, they are in a reachable position for us even to this date, and we are reachable to them.

The possibility to reach the unreached with techniques of growth monitoring, breast-feeding, oral re-hydration, immunization, family spacing, family income generation, improvement of female population is still open; but what makes it difficult to reach these communities is the general chaos created by a confused and unjust system which does not meet the basic needs, the economic aspirations, and the cultural demands of the people.

Production-centered, western development paradigm created by a deaf and dumb elite class, who accepted 'affluence' of the western model as their style of life, has successfully manipulated through communication systems, the urban poor and the rural underprivileged non-elite class, also to develop sub-conscious aspirations of the potential that the latter too had to reach the same kind of affluence. The latter was left with only these ambitions while in reality their labour was bought cheap by industries producing for the export market, their land was expropriated by the urban middle class or foreign companies, while they themselves were severed from the soil that was traditionally theirs. Their traditional agriculture and agro-based cottage industries were modernized by the introduction of chemical fertilisers, weedicides and pesticides over whose prices they had no control and their water resources were polluted or disturbed by the imposition of modern hydro-irrigation dams and their local markets were completely flooded by imported goods under the open market system and so on. Agro-based industries and cottage crafts were no longer able to compete with mass produced cheap goods.

Above all, their traditional culture was disturbed beyond recognition, thus creating human beings, families and communities alienated from their own value systems, self-reliant development systems and territories.

It was nearly 2600 years ago that Lord Buddha in a discourse known as the Maha Mangala Suttra taught the world thirty eight virtues that lead to happiness and well-being of humanity. Among them the virtue of looking after one's parents, wife and children is stressed. He not only taught about the importance of nutrition and health, pertaining to the physical body but he also went into great detail to teach and explain to us how from the very conception of a human-being in a mother's womb the kind of processes that affected the child's physical, mental, spiritual and social well-being. In other words, the total personality awakening of the human-being was taken into consideration long before even the child was born.

In the same discourse, at the very beginning, he talks about the environment which is conducive to human well being. By environment he meant both the physical factors such as the air, water and the soil, the social factors such as the moral and ethical relationships and the cultural factors such as the style of life and the economic factors such as sustainable production systems and the political factors such as the need for righteous rulers and the duties and obligations of the ruled. He did not leave out anything that contributed to human progress, both spiritual and material.

The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and earlier similar documents, the 1959 UN Declaration of the Rights of the Child and what followed after that, were what Lord Buddha and other great religious leaders and philosophers in the world taught us thousands of years ago. What we have done in the modern era through the United Nations agencies and other civilised human associations has been to simply bring these precepts and principles into a kind of legal terminology. Unfortunately, this very useful exercise has confined itself to intellectual discussions conducted at national and international forums like this and in formal classrooms without deep spiritual commitment to add practice to precept.

On the other hand the cultures of the poorest of the poor that we have to reach are retaining this knowledge and wisdom as a part of their day to day life. So, what is most important is not trying to reach them through a one way communication process of ideas, technologies and resources but to make it turn the other way round so that an awakening process within the families and communities is generated in such a manner that a free expression to what they already possess is possible. This is where I say the establishments and their managers must be reachable, to these communities. This is exactly what we are lacking today in spite of the very sincere attempts made by the UNICEF, the WHO and others in the field.

To me there is no other way for this two way process to start than by non-violent revolutionary processes which

should take place from within, in the minds, the hearts and the attitudes of all human beings extending from the most underprivileged to the super-privileged in the world.

Very often wherever we as NGOs approach inter-governmental organizations with proven strategies to reach the unreached they appreciate our efforts and agree with us. But when it comes to concrete action they console us by stating that after all they are only international bureaucrats and they had to work within the country's government policies and programmes. We understand their plight but we would only beseech them not to talk about revolutions of the child survival type if they cannot devise strategies to change the attitudes of policy makers.

We have to recognize the fact that governments can never bring about the development of people. The governments can only remove the obstacles that stand in the people's way, provide the knowledge and resources they lack, facilitate the inflow of selective information and appropriate technologies and thus facilitate the people to initiate, implement and sustain a people-centered development programme. The first condition is to provide the psycho-social security the people need in the form of human rights, rule of law, rights to the control of one's immediate environment and participation in decision making that affect their lives. Community learning, community planning and community awakening are three aspects that work integrally in such a people-centered self-development process.

It is only the people themselves who can reach the physically, mentally, and socially handicapped children among them. It is people's own institutions located within their physical vicinity and where they can have psychological affinity that such an exercise is possible. Non-governmental organizations have proved that they could not only reach these communities but also the communities could reach them. In other words, unlike that of bureaucratic institutions, the question of non-reachability does not arise with non-governmental organizations. But non-governmental organizations themselves have to be very cautious not to

become only a kind of second hand delivery mechanism to reach people and places where the governmental machinery cannot reach. They must be independent by their own right within moral and righteous governmental laws and receptive to everything in the fields of science, technology and organizational and managerial skills that are available to the well established exploitative top-down systems in the world.

The role of NGOs should be firstly, to promote community learning, provide needed skills, train leadership, facilitate financial inputs, open up markets to obtain just prices and so on, all directed to strengthen and empower community organizations within their own localities. Secondly, to help clusters of community organizations to build networks for wider participation and involvement in self-development. Thirdly, to promote regional or national organizations to influence policies affecting their communities. At each of these levels people's organizations can establish partnerships and linkages with governmental instruments and services, universities and research institutions and with other private bodies for development planning and implementation as equals. This is the only way to establish trust, prevent alienation and develop effective programmes.

The non-governmental organizations are the bridges between the unreached and the unreachable demanding from both sectors commitments and sacrifices. Sarvodaya Movement in Sri Lanka was following this non-violent revolutionary path for over three decades. Our success was more with the unreached and our failure was our inability to reach and change the unreachable. This is why I say the problem is not the unreached but the unreachable who must be persuaded in their own self-interest if not for broader altruistic reasons to change their attitudes and structures to accommodate the just aspirations of the people who have been left out of the present development processes.

I think we have sufficient statistical data and information about the magnitude of the problems pertaining to children and health. As I mentioned before we do not lack the

scientific knowledge needed for say primary health care. I will end up with one example. Take the case of child labour in Asia. According to Raphael Lazo and Graham Bennett of the Balai Data Bank, Manila, there are 261.3 million child workers in Asia. Of this India alone accounts for a 111 million working children. Can we ever tackle this problem from a top-down strategy? Or isn't it more practical to allow communities themselves to utilize their psycho-social environment, give them control over their physical locality and local resources, and provide them with only those skills and resources needed to tackle their problem at their own level. The strategies to be devised, therefore, I believe, should be to generate a series of such micro-processes building up into a macro process at regional and national levels.

This may be the only non-violent and constructive way in which the unreached and the unreachable could be brought together to reach the goals of Child Survival and Primary Health Care.

AN AFTERWORD

Two hours before I made the above speech in the conference hall of Kartika Chandra Hotel in Jakarata, my document case and that of Prof. Priyani Soysa were stolen in the dining hall of the same hotel. As this happened during lunch time and not even ten feet from where the VIPP of the conference, including the Minister of Health of Indonesia and the Executive Director of UNICEF were having their food, within a few minutes of the theft, everybody present there came to know about it. My document case contained valuables including my passport, air tickets, travellers cheques and cash. The loss of travel documents alarmed me and immediately I brought this fact to the notice of the symposium organisers, the UNICEF authorities who invited me and the hotel management. The VIPP who were present instructed their subordinates to help us immediately and the latter's heads bowed in assent.

What followed thereafter was a clear indication of how the unreachable conduct themselves in matters pertaining to the unreached, in this instance two helpless foreign victims representing non-governmental organisations. As we were in a strange country without knowing the language of the people or the procedure to be followed, all we could do was to make a complaint to the appropriate authorities, which we did. The thought of us being invitees at a prestigious gathering and rendered so helpless by relieving us of our possessions shocked and disappointed us. Yet we thought we were among responsible people. There was no negligence on our part. Bags were kept on chairs barely 10 feet away from the table where we served our food and surrounded by a distinguished gathering, inside the dinning hall of the hotel and nobody warned us that this hotel was notorious for gentlemen-like thieves.

Over the past 33 years I have travelled to over 90 countries and what saddens me is that this theft had to take place whilst being an invitee of the UNICEF to which I was, so attached. It is not so much the theft and the articles that I lost that worried me but the attitude displayed by the UNICEF authorities in Jakarta who invited me; the organisers of the symposium who were my hosts and the hotel management who had a responsibility by their guests, specially in the case of a theft of this magnitude.

The Executive Director of UNICEF, Dr. James P. Grant, was concerned and gave instructions to the UNICEF office that they should help me with the travel documents etc. Although this instruction was never carried out, his gesture enhanced my respect for him still further as a person who does not belong to the category of unreachable. Unfortunately, I cannot say the same thing about the others in the UNICEF who were officially and morally responsible. This incident reminds me of Leo Tolstoy's famous saying "I sit on a man's back, choking him and making him carry me and yet assure myself and others that I am sorry for him and wish to lighten his load by all possible means except by getting off his back". Whilst everybody sympathised, no

body moved to assist me in obtaining a fresh passport, to get some travellers cheques, to get a ticket for me to return, obtain police reports and to attend to the formalities of the Immigration department. Mr. Bin Sheriff informed me that he had telexed Colombo UNICEF Office. Presumably he expected that telex to play miracles. The organisers were kind enough to give me a nice young man to accompany me to the police station. The trouble was he could not speak English and my knowledge of Bhasha Indonesia was nill.

As for the hotel management they shifted me from room 603 to 612 for security reasons as my room key was also in the stolen document case. After that the highest responsible officer in the hotel management I met was a minor servant who was made to accompany me to the police station in a car I borrowed from a friend. Of course I had to hang on at the police station for nearly 1 1/2 hours (again for the first time in my life) until the policeman made up his mind to favour me with writing down my complaint and giving a piece of paper, that too after I got my Embassy to talk to him. For two days I had to struggle without even food when my friends in Sri Lanka Embassy and in Jakarta came to my rescue. They assisted me in obtaining a fresh passport, air tickets, needed finances, immigration formalities etc. which made it possible for me to return to Sri Lanka in time for an important assignment on the 8th December 1988. I would be still in Jakarta if I waited for a response from UNICEF Office in the disturbed Colombo City on a week-end.

The evening prior to my departure a UNICEF official came up to me and inquired whether I got back the document case and after I reprimanded him severely for their irresponsible conduct he forced himself and signed my hotel bill for which I am thankful to him. Of course he knew that my per diem cheque given by Colombo UNICEF Office was also gone.

I write this though briefly, to make a point that the international bureaucracies should stop talking about the unreached with the tongue in their cheek. We in the NGOs can reach the poorest of the poor because we are humane.

We are involved in this work because it is a sacrifice. May I pose the question "If the same kind of thing happened to Dr James P. Grant or the Minister of Health of Indonesia and not to two humble participants, would they have behaved in this manner? They would have turned heaven and earth upside down to find the culprit and reduce the anxiety and inconvenience to a minimum. As I mentioned at the beginning of my speech I accepted this invitation because of the tremendous respect I had for Dr Jim Grant and the belief in the campaign he has launched for child survival. Otherwise I have plenty to do back home with the unreached, rather than subject myself to such humiliating treatment. If NGO participation in this type of campaign is desired to be continued seriously, everybody involved in the campaign should possess a visionary, missionary and human spirit.

14.

Professionalisation of Sarvodaya Services Community Understanding And National Awakening

(The Presidential Address made at the 31st Annual General Meeting of the Sri Lanka Sarvodaya Shramadana Sangamaya held on 26 September 1987 by Dr A. T. Ariyaratne)

The first memories which come to my mind are of the Sarvodaya workers both the laity and the clergy who, having supported us in various ways in the service of the people during the first 30 years of this Movement, have left our midst. Of the names I remember, the Venerable Kalukondayawe Pannasekera, the Venerable Heenatiyana Dhammaloka, the Venerable Pandit Hiswelle Gnanawimala, the Venerable Pandit Tunnane Sumanatissa, the Venerable Pandit Hanguranketa Sumanajoti, the Venerable Pandit Henpitagedera Gnanaseeha, the Venerable Pandit Henpitagedera Gnanavasa, the Venerable Pandit Neluwe Gunananda, the Venerable Pandit Pimbure Soratha and Bishop Lakshman Wickremasinghe stand out among the clergy. Likewise the names of Hon. A. Ratnayake, Mr. D. L. F. Pedris, Mudaliyar S. K. Sinnetamby, Mr. M. A. Tilakaratna, Mr. Dharmasena Arampatta, Mr. Chandra Soysa, Mr. Upali Senanayake, Mr. K. Wijesekera, my uncle Mr. A. T. C. Jinadasa, and Mrs. Somi Meegama come to my mind.

I remember our brother K. Kadiramalai who died at the hands of assassins exactly one year ago from today. It is our duty to gratefully remember these and others not with us and bestow merit on them.

Mr. M. W. Karunananda, a powerful Sarvodaya guide, is today feeble and on a sick bed. We wish that his health improves and that he lives long. Although elders such as Mr. Albert Edirisinghe, Mr. R. A. Wijeygunawardana, Mr. G. D. Wickremaratna, Mr. Arnolis Silva, Prof. L. G. Hewage, Mr. Tilak Ratnayaka and Mr. Buddhadasa Rasaputram are no longer actively engaged in Sarvodaya work today, we remember them and wish them long life.

We remember other elders such as Mrs. Sita Rajasuriya, who in spite of reaching three score years and ten, is still working and living with us in good health, Mr. William

Kandage, Mr. Cyril Ekanayaka, Mr. P. W. Mahawatte, Mr. S. K. Velayuthapillai and wish them good health and long life.

We also wish good health and long life to the revered monks the Venerable Pandit Ganegama Saranankara, the Venerable Pandit Welletota Pannadassi, the Venerable Pandit Nedalagamuwe Jinananda, the Venerable Pandit Bulutota Ratnasara, the Venerable Pandit Kirimetiyawe Pannasagara and the Venerable Pandit Welimille Somananda and others.

I consider that the greatest resource we have acquired during the last three decades are the leaders both male and female who have emerged from our Movement, been nourished by it, have come into the limelight and are turning into youth and passing from youth to adulthood. While the active leadership of the Movement has been in large measure passed on to their care, it is our duty to transfer it wholly to them in the future.

Sarvodaya has worked as a living movement in the past and continues to do so now because within it was, step by step, a mature middle-aged leadership, a dynamic young leadership and a youth and children's leadership moulding itself to take their place. Therefore, while there was no conflict between-age groups within the Movement on the one hand, it was neither a movement of the aged nor a disruptionary movement of the young. I expect that the new young and the old who undertake responsibilities at this General Meeting will safeguard this important characteristic in the future as well.

Another important characteristic of Sarvodaya is that Sarvodaya workers develop themselves also along with the Sarvodaya philosophy, programmes, techniques and organisations. If people are not subjected to timely progressive change in keeping with the social climate which obtains from time to time and without sacrificing principles, that enterprise will stop then and there. It will become weak. We should, having understood social change and

without violating our fundamental principles, change our Movement and ourselves. In the future also we should subject ourselves to change intelligently.

I think it is appropriate to give a brief description regarding this. The Sarvodaya Shramadana which emerged from Shramadana camps as a study service is today a non-state, people's development effort occupying the first place from the perspective of mass participation. We have undertaken a very responsible task, whether we look at it from the objectives we seek to achieve or from the services we have undertaken to render, or from the capital and material resources and the work force we have. In the effort to discharge these responsibilites we have had to undertake many structural changes. Let us look at a few of these.

It is difficult to implement a people's development programme with a work force doing part-time work, to be operative in all parts of Sri Lanka, having a direct impact on about 20% of the population, spending more than 50 million rupees per year, meeting the legal requirements of the state and the criteria of the donor institutes, concerned with almost every section of the human society, as an entirely voluntary service. Therefore, we should not wonder, if gradually, Sarvodaya services are being implemented through a professional work force.

By the time the year 1987-88 dawns, the work done earlier by a President, Vice-Presidents, a General Secretary, an Organising Secretary and a Treasurer would be done by a full-time set of Directors and professionally qualified staff under an Executive Director. The transfer of the implementation programme of the Movement to a set of professionally competent people is occurring not only at the Headquarters and allied institutes but also at district, regional and village level depending on varying needs. While we should accept that the professional background of this set of workers is a progressive change, we should concentrate on the responsibilities cast on us on account of that very fact.

A question which is likely to arise in most people is the extent to which our workers would preserve and maintain the dedication arising from the Sarvodaya philosophy in the face of this professionalisation. That it is a real danger, we also accept. But non-professionalisation is not the answer. We should make every effort to come closer to the Sarvodaya philosophy and further develop our dedication while at the same time becoming professionalised.

I see two avenues for this. One is for the workers who join Sarvodaya for professional services to get closer to Sarvodaya traditions and practices and to become partners both individually and collectively in the forces endeavouring to achieve our broad goals of personality awakening, family awakening, Gramodaya, Deshodaya and Vishvodaya.

The second is the influence which places of work, groups and communities associated with every worker should exert on the professional workers. In other words, the prevention of professional workers becoming a bureauracy depends on the people's power aligned with Sarvodaya which is generated not only through them but also through the people served by them and the community. In the same way that democracy is prevalent only if there is a set of alert citizens, it is only if there are people who have an understanding of Sarvodaya that we can be certain of reaping the proper benefits and not suffering the ill-effects of professionalisation. In other words community understanding and professionalisation should go hand in hand. This is a responsibility not only of the full-time professional workers of Sarvodaya, but also of those members of Sarvodaya who participate voluntarily in Savodaya work and also of those who participate and benefit from Sarvodaya programmes.

We should launch a giant programme going hand in hand with professionalisation to generate this community understanding. I would like to place before you some ideas regarding this.

You are all aware that Sarvodaya is an enterprise which

looks at society as a whole. While the spiritual, moral, cultural, social, economic and political aspects are equal components of this whole we have compounded these organically without doing violence to our basic principles of truth, non-violence and selflessness. It is our revered monks and other clergy who should provide the leadership for the spiritual, moral, cultural and social aspects. The religious leaders could without any political interference give the leadership to plan and carry out programmes of meditation under spiritual aspects, programmes to liberate the people from committing the five sins under moral aspects, programmes to get the people accustomed to a simple, civilised life-style under cultural aspects, programmes for total education, health, human obligations and rights, people's participation and community leadership and justice and peace under social aspects.

While Sarvodaya has demonstrated all these programmes in some measure by example and by action, we expect our religious leaders to implement them on a mass scale in the future while safeguarding their quality.

During the last four years when our country was in a situation of extreme violence and danger, the foundation of the peace programmes we implemented was the generation of spiritual energy and righteous thought. A good example of this is the way people acclaimed the meditational march we organised about three months ago from the precincts of the Temple of the Tooth in Kandy to the Ruwanveli Seya in the Sacred City of Anuradhapura. The community understanding received by more than 2 lakhs of people who thus participated and its impact on the minds of people and on social peace by the natural energy, the spiritual energy and the mind energy is an example of the mass scale programme I refer to. We should organise more and more of such programmes in the future.

An unbelievable moral degradation is taking place in modern society due to alcohol and drugs. It is the youth, the life blood of the nation, which suffer most from this

scourge. A small scale programme has been launched, under the leadership of some of our younger monks, with the objectives of rehabilitating the addicted, preventing those who may be prone to it from being addicted, creating public opinion and drawing the attention of government policy makers towards the harmful effects of alcohol and drugs. We place before the younger monks and clergy of other religions the challenge of extending this programme which has been started in the Kalutara and Galle districts to other districts as well.

A factor which supports social degeneration is the lack of a spiritual and scientific understanding of the human personality. It is on account of this that religious education is extremely important. The establishment of "Sadaham Samaja" (Just and Righteous Society) and explaining the Dhamma and directing the people to lead a religious life is a Sarvodaya programme which has been launched by another group of monks.

The late Venerable Pandit Henpitagedera Gnanaseeha established the Pathakada Sarvodaya Community Leadership Bhikku Training Centre and showed how, through the leadership of the monks, a desirable impact could be made on the cultural and social life of the people. If the spiritual and moral aspects are one bank and the economic and political aspects are the other bank of a river, we should regard the social and cultural aspects as the bridge which joins the two. In these aspects also a great responsibility is cast on monks and other clergy. It is foolish in the extreme to think that without this bridge, there will be purity, peace and justice in the political and economic field. In other words to tackle political and economic problems without moving towards a revolution or reconstruction economically and politically across a social and cultural bridge based on a righteous discipline or spiritual and cultural foundation is like being pushed unaware into a river in which there are man-eating crocodiles.

These ideas which have been expressed with religious dignitaries in mind are valid to a great extent for responsible

people such as teachers, learned men, government employees and those who earn their wealth righteously. For these community leaders, a variety of Sarvodaya programmes have been designed and implemented to some extent. Some which may be mentioned here are the peace camps organised through Shanti-Sena programmes, the resoultion of conflicts through the Sarvodaya legal aid services, rehabilitation of convicted persons, prevention of crime and efforts made to enable citizens to obtain their rights under the law.

All of the programmes mentioned above need a scientific, technological and professional efficiency and they can all be implemented island-wide. I put forward before the professional workers of the Sangamaya the challenge of working with people on these lines unassumingly, island-wide and in an organised way.

Based on the gradual progress with respect to the aspect mentioned so far, we can, within the limits of righteous and moral laws take part in the economic and political life. More than half the people living in Sri Lanka today are those belonging to the poorer classes. Of the balance, two-thirds belong to the middle class and are neither rich nor poor. Those who may be regarded as belonging to the rich and affluent class are a group less than 10%. But it has been possible for the small group to subjugate the mass of the people both politically and economically. There are ways and institutions which they use either directly or indirectly, knowingly or unknowingly, to perpetuate this injustice. Violence, falsehoods and egoism are the ways they use. But they do not get on to the roads for their violent tactics. They deceive the oppressed masses by conjuring up a threat to caste, race, religion or politics and get them on to the road. Violence is encouraged by providing arms and weapons. The mass media are used with subtlety. A collective egoism is generated through either Sinhala or Tamil racism. Time and again, the people have been deceived by these tactics and from an economic and political perspective, have fallen from the frying pan into the fire.

For the mass of the people, economic and political justice can be obtained only through truthful, non-violent, selfless means. A righteous, disciplined non-violence is not a weakness. It is a great force. It is not necessary to destroy public property or kill people through anger and hatred to implement it. What is needed is to have an understanding of the real status of the society and to harness the people's power to organise those subjugated by the new economic and political forces for their benefit. Then those economic and political injustices which need institutional changes would be laid bare before the public.

We should not forget that when Mahatma Gandhi along with several lakhs of non-violent people was spinning yarn on the wheel, how the Lancashire factories of the British Empire closed down and the guns of the British Empire on which the sun never set were made inactive. We did not see the people who toppled the Marcos regime in the Philippines toppling lamp posts or shedding a drop of blood or harming any public property in the course they followed.

It is amazing how the community understanding generated through spiritual energy converts itself into a non-violent force which can silence the arms and weapons used by the powerful to oppress the weak. Therefore my plea to be non-violent is not asking for an acceptance of foul play and injustice.

The people have, several times, changed the "bucket" called the government to obtain a fair quantity of "water" called happiness from the national "well" of physical and spiritual resources during about 40 years after independence. In the future too there is a likelihood of this "bucket" being changed either through elections or other means. But on account of a change of "bucket" the possibility of obtaining the "water" of happiness is problematic. Just as a bucket without holes is needed, the well should have spiritual, moral, cultural and social springs. While the activation of these springs is the responsibility of the

non-professional Sarvodaya workers, the responsibility of the professional Sarvodaya workers is to create the technical components of the bucket, the pulley, the rope and the pots in the economic and political field.

In other words, what we are doing in Sarvodaya is neither creating nor destroying governments. It is creating a new society. If we do this correctly, the setting up of a just democratic government will be done by the people.

The model of the non-violent revolution is emerging through such creative programmes as Life-line Activities, Sarvodaya Economic Enterprises Development Services, Sarvodaya Suwa Setha Services, Sarvodaya Relief and Rehabilitation Services, Sarvodaya Peace Camps and People's Peace Organisation and the Sarvodaya Development Education Services, all of which are functioning together as an organic whole. The organisations required for the non-violent Sarvodaya Revolution are arising as an organic entity through the philosophy, a programme for supplying basic needs, Sarvodaya Shramadana Samitis where decision-making is with people's participation and the collectives such as District, Regional and National Boards formed of such Samitis.

What is being done through these is not becoming sectarian partners in the current social inconsistencies and engaging in a destructive activity like throwing the baby out with the bath water. What we do is to determine the causes of the inconsistencies in a holistic way, preserve that which should be preserved, create that which needs to be created, and allow only that which is unnecessary to be destroyed. For this, I stress once again the importance of professional efficiency just as much as the people's participation.

We are glad that the fighting, the destruction and the killings which took place in the North and the East as racism have been stopped immediately due to the intervention of two state leaders. We hope that the present fighting

between the militant groups in these same regions, which is a threat to this peace, would cease and real peace would dawn among them. We appeal to them to give up violence, racism and separatism and suffuse themselves completely with non-violent Sarvodaya ideas. We are deeply grieved about the present violence in the South. Our analysis is that this is due not so much to opposition to the Peace Accord as to a variety of causes such as the injustices of the law, non-just distribution of economic benefits to the people and inhibiting the freedom of expressing democratic opposition. Therefore, we request the government to take a long-term perspective and act with a kind heart to use the power of the Dharma and not the power of the sword to ensure that the situation in the North does not arise in the South. Then we also can, with all our heart, do a greater service than now to create peace in the South.

It is not a real peace, if peace occurs in the North and it is broken in the South. Even if there is peace in both the North and the South, if the broken cordial relations between the North and South are not restored from the bottom of our hearts, then also there is no true peace. What we are asking the people is to join hands with Sarvodaya to build justice and peace throughout the country while consolidating the peace between groups in the North and groups in the South.

While we do not like to see armed conflicts on our soil we also do not like to see armed foreigners, however well-disposed they are towards us, staying in our country to safeguard peace. What we need is not an Indian army but righteous messengers of the Indian culture. But until such time as we take a long-term perspective, give up ethnic conflicts, respect each other justly, and establish peace, they will remain with us.

Therefore, dear Sri Lankans, let us be peaceful, let us establish peace. Let us thank the Indian army and bid them good-bye. Let us re-establish the historic Sri Lankan-Indian

friendliness on a basis of genuine equality reminding ourselves of great leaders like Dharmasoka, Mahatma Gandhi and Shri Nehru.

We have twelve years to leave the 20th century and enter the 21st . We should enter the 21st century on a firmer foundation than the way we have spent the 40 years since gaining independence. Other national organisations, institutions and individuals, should like us, first of all, look back on their ideas, behaviour and activities. There is no doubt that if making use of such lessons learnt, we have the power to make a genuine effort through the next 12 years, we can put Sri Lanka on the path of being an Island of Righteousness and an Island of Plenty.

There is a method of self-evaluation which is the inheritance of all human groups ranging from the simplest society to the most complex. Here, what I mean by self-evaulation is the investigation by the community groups themselves of the causes which have led to effects regarded as consisting of events or a group of events.

A situation has arisen where it is not possible to carry out a self-evaluation or self-investigation about what has happened to our country as an unbiased national community. The rulers of the country, the groups opposed to the rulers, the Buddhist clergy and other religious leaders, community leaders of various groups, the public belonging to different races, are all taking their respective individual stands without undertaking a commonly acceptable self-evaluation. Therefore, it cannot be thought that under the existing situation they will agree about a commonly acceptable self-evaluation method.

If that is so, should we remain silent and walk towards a common destruction allowing anything to take place and any destructive activity to occur anyhow?

If it is not possible to carry out a self-evaluation which is nationally acceptable, then we think the time has come

for various groups who can exert some influence on the Sri Lankan people to carry out either individually or collectively a self-evaluation on these lines.

First of all, all groups should understand the social background against which such an evaluation can be done. The principal background factor I see is the deep anger in the mass of the people against the State. Those who run the State should honestly investigate the factors which have led to such anger. While unreasonable causes should be explained, an honest attempt should be publicly made to remove the reasonable causes.

It is not only about the present rulers, but also about those who ruled the country earlier, that the people, even if they do not have an anger, have a dislike and lack of faith. They also should engage in an honest self-evaluation. The most powerful moral force in our country belonged to the Maha Sangha. If the Maha Sangha can carry on their activities keeping a steadfast faith only in the discipline of the Buddha's teachings, there is no difficulty at all for them to engage in an impartial analysis of cause and effect in relation to the modern social problems without in any way being partisan.

But when they engage in analyses using other criteria, not only does their social power erode as a whole but also they get caught in various power groups and are motivated to act inconsistently. Our feeling is that if at least the devotional and learned Maha Theros get together and carry out a self-evaluation on the lines indicated by the Buddha, it will be for the protection and progress of both the Buddhists and the doctrine.

Apart from such exalted groups, the learned in the education and social development fields should engage in such a deep self-evaulation. Without stopping, we who are part of the common people, should contemplate deeply on such things as the practices in our life-style, our responsibilities

in bringing up our children at home and carry out a self-evaulation at our level.

Such an evaluation is only a start. The next step is to plan a programme to eliminate or change the causes which such an evaluation reveals. A better harvest can be expected if. better seeds are sown. If as in the past 40 years we sow in the future more of low-quality seeds and less of high-quality seeds, we shall in the near future, instead of living on a fertile field be compelled to perish together on an infertile desert. The choice is ours.

As we in Sarvodaya see, I propose to this Meeting that, having done a self-evaulation in this manner, we should prepare a 10-year-plan to be implemented from 1990 to 2000 A.D. We should immediately appoint a board of the wisest among us to prepare such a plan. A national body, representative of the entirety of the Sri Lankan peoples should be appointed to assist and guide such a board and to implement nationally the plan which they will create. A national board consisting of one thousand people selected by them should be established. You may recall that with this objective in mind, a one-day meeting of one thousand people was called by Sarvodaya in 1982 and a discussion was held on this spot where the Vishva Samadhi Hall has been built. We can use that experience also in establishing this new national board I am proposing.

If this meeting accepts this idea, a primary conveners' Committee consisting of five people may be appointed today itself and the responsibility of establishing a national body and a national board may be given to them. The appointment of staff, obtaining of office space, deciding on time-frames and searching for capital resources and all such activities may be decided by this Conveners' Committee. You will recall the Buddhist Commission Report which inspired the 1956 political revolution. Although at that time it was a significant publication the responsibility for implementing its recommendations was cast not on the State but on

political groups doing the governing. What is expected from the process I am proposing is an effort by the people to implement a detailed plan prepared by them on the basis of a self-evaluation conducted by themselves. There is no objection to harnessing the State and political organisations as instruments in this effort in appropriate ways. We in Sarvodaya have stated from the beginning that the State law and State power should operate within the law of the Dharma and people's power. The Dharma should show the way to the people. The people should show the way to the State. Then as stated in the following stanza, the responsibilities of the State will be invariably discharged, the people will be peaceful and the country will prosper.

"RĀJA DHAMMŌ PRAJĀ RATTĀ
VRUDHI PAGNGNÜPA SEVANANG
LŌKA VOHARA VIGNGNATHTHI
ATHTHANO PARIPALANANG"

"Safeguarding the community, keeping company with the wise, knowing the state of the country and self-discipline, these are the virtues which those who run the State should practise."

I shall stop now requesting you to think deeply on this address from the Chair, where I have referred to the professionalisation of the Sarvodaya Services, Community Understanding and moving to National Awakening through Sarvodaya and take to the service of the people in a selfless way.

MAY THE TRIPLE GEM BLESS YOU.
MAY ALL THE GODS BLESS YOU.
MAY ALL BEINGS BE WELL AND HAPPY!

15

Sarvodaya and Resource Partners

As the President of the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka, I welcome you all to this second Sarvodaya International Donor Consortium meeting or as we prefer to call it the second Sarvodaya Resource Partners' Consortium meeting.

Quantitatively speaking Sarvodaya is working in nearly 8000 rural and urban communities in Sri Lanka out of which in 5600 we have a planned programme of development. All the individuals and village communities participating in this programme are an integral part of the Sarvodaya Movement and when we use the word 'we', all of them, nearly 700,000 families or over 3 million people, are included. Qualitatively speaking there are no 'givers' and 'receivers.' We are all partners, participant-beneficiaries in a co-operative self-realization or awakening process. We are endeavouring to awaken ourselves Spiritually, Morally, Culturally, Socially, Economically and Politically as human personalities, family groups, village and urban communities, national communities and finally as a World Community.

We prefer to call this meeting a Resource Partners' Consortium for that same reason. What we are attempting to do in microcosm is the realization of the universal ideal of One World One People. Caring and Sharing by all for the well-being, for the awakening of one and all – Sarvodaya.

As my colleagues will be dealing with specific programmes in the Budget, it is not for me to say anything on them. On the other hand, it is my duty as the President of the Movement to make some general remarks.

On the 4th and 5th of February 1988, we had a pre-Consortium discussion with four of our partners, NOVIB, CIDA, ITDG and NORAD in The Hague. Later I too, had a two-day meeting with HELVETAS in Zurich on the same subject. I have distributed the copies of the speech I made in The Hague to the participants of this meeting as I have outlined there the important role we have to play in our country at this time and how we do it.

Since the beginning of this decade, Sarvodaya has stated publicly that Sri Lanka is entering an increasingly worsening crisis. Today it has reached catastrophic proportions, resulting in wide-spread fear among all people, the breaking down of law and order everywhere and the systematic development of the country is in a state of disarray. This situation cannot be contained by exclusively using the armed forces and communication media to restore law and order.

Everybody in this country, the government, the people and all our friends who are interested in peace and well-being of our people must together go into the deeper roots of the problem and then try to release processes from among the people themselves to find a corrective direction. Without raising the collective consciousness of the people, motivating them for constructive non-violent action, mobilising and organising them for decentralized and planned, self-reliant and self-development activities to improve their spiritual and material quality of life, and, giving them every possible support for such a course of action. I cannot think of any other top-down steps that will bring us towards the resolution of this crisis.

Therefore, I would appeal to you to look at the Sarvodaya programmes as an effort working at a micro-level reaching out for a macro-impact, so that peace with justice can be re-established in our country with the direct participation of people in organised groups for development as its central strategy.

Sarvodaya is an integrated and total approach to development. Development is not possible without peace. Peace is not possible without development. Peace and development cannot be realized without justice. Peace, Development and Justice should be founded on a strong collective consciousness of the people, their motivation, their mobilization, their organised participation and the achievement of their aspirations in a planned and sustainable way. Sarvodaya, very briefly, is endeavouring to do just this.

Sarvodaya has completed 30 years of continuous service in this country. It started very small and developed progressively to become what it is today. Perhaps Sarvodaya is the largest non-governmental organisation in the developing world today, looking at it from the number of people with whom it is working in proportion to the total population in the country, the almost uniformly distributed national organisational network it has developed, the variety of programmes that have been evolved touching every aspect of human life and the visibility it has among the community of non-governmental organisations in the world.

This does not mean, in proportion to our activities and the per capita cost we are incurring, that we are the most funded non-governmental organisation in the world. We are far from it. Even nationally there are organisations whose per capita funding for the number of beneficiaries they serve is much higher. From the point of view of being a People's Movement, undoubtedly we are the best organised and the most widespread in this country. But we are also one of the least funded in proportion to the volume of work we are doing.

Out of a paid cadre of approximately 9000 workers in the Movement, less than 25 have been recruited from outside for their professional skills. All the others have graduated from their participation and experience in village level work and are today holding responsible positions in the Movement. Before 1st October, 1986, we did not have a committed budget. With the exception of a 3-year Block Grant from NOVIB in the seventies, all the other funds came on a project to project basis and that too, from 1972 onwards. Before that we did not have even this. Therefore, in reality only from 1986 October 1st have we been in a position to seriously improve the professional skills of our workers and I leave it to our Monitors and Evaluators to speak frankly about the successes and failures of this attempt during this short period.

Now, we are asking our resource partners and donors for another 3 to 5 year commitment, with the hope that we will

not only continue with our natural organic growth of the movement and programme inplementation but also that we will do it with increased efficiency with a cadre of workers who are being trained to deliver a professional service.

We have repeatedly said that we are not trying to make or unmake governments. We are also not trying to compete with any other governmental or non-governmental agency. What we are trying to do is to bring about a non-violent change in man and society through our own commitment and constructive work. It is because of this non-involvement in power and party politics that we are able to work everywhere in this country without serious opposition or confrontation by conflicting interests. This does not mean that there are no risks involved. In an atmosphere of suspicion, insanity and cruelty we have to move about cautiously in doing our work. We have lost the lives of several of our committed youth leaders and workers for no fault of theirs. But the commitment, the dedication and the fearlessness of those who were spared remain, and they are continuing our work everywhere.

The Life Line Programme lays the foundation for organised, planned and sustainable community awakening activities. The Supporting Services strengthen their capacity. Special projects provide them with technical and capital resources to continue to improve their physical quality of life. The Suwa Setha Sewa Programme provides them with the national network with which the most deprived and handicapped in the communities find an equal and useful place in society. The SEEDS (Sarvodaya Economic Enterprises Development Services) Programme provides communities with an alternative way to find their places in the economy. The People's Peace Organisation, the Legal Aid Services, Sarvodaya Savings Programme, Sarvodaya Women's Movement and other such Sarvodaya national institutions provide opportunities for these communities to make a national impact to build a better society. In other words, as challenges came Sarvodaya responded to them within its philosophy and objectives with responses which

progressively resulted in the organic or the integrated Movement that it is today. It is for this total programme that we are presenting to you a consolidated budget.

In the Agenda that we will be taking up, you will find the subject of Relief and Rehabilitation. Even though this budget does not include our relief and rehabilitation activities. I thought it relevant to make a reference to this as I have no doubt that this will be an area which will take a greater attention on your part and also on our part in the months to come. Therefore, I would like to make a few remarks on this subject under five topics, namely, Relief, Rehabilitation, Reconstruction, Reconciliation and Development.

What we mean by Relief is providing emergency help by way of food, clothing, medicine, temporary shelter and hope. In Rehabilitation we take a step further from the relief stage where the victims begin to psychologically accept the situation and the challenge, get better organised to make their own inputs also and go on to a stage where they try to build up semi-permanent shelters, either in the old places where they were living or in the new places allotted to them, get more assured food supplies, better sanitary facilities, even have makeshift educational programmes for children and find avenues to earn some kind of livelihood. This is a more stable situation than the Relief stage.

Reconstruction is the stage where a greater certainty of continuity lies. They begin to settle down to a life with better housing, sanitary facilities, income generation, schooling, health and medical facilities and normal community life.

Reconciliation is a psycho-social process that is taking place right through relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction, where these services are provided without distinction of caste, race, religion, language or any other divisive considerations. All kinds of spiritual, moral, cultural and social programmes are organised and implemented to develop mutual respect, confidence and sharing among conflicting parties.

Development is the stage where these communities become an integral part of the Sarvodaya village re-awakening programme and take equal place with thousands of other villages and participate in all the Gramadana, Divisional, District, Provincial and National programmes.

Having defined these five sectors, I must caution you that they may not come in that order but may merge into one another. The important thing to remember is that we conceive all this as a total process. For example, when we do relief services, we do not separate Sinhalese from the Tamils, or Tamils from the Sinhalese. Irrespective of the community to which each one belongs, we look at the emergency needs that they are faced with. At this stage itself the reconciliation process begins.

Before the worst of the communal clashes that occurred in 1983, whenever there were communal riots and other disasters, the Sarvodaya Movement was the first to step in to render emergency relief. In 1983 July, when every citizen was in a state of shock, within 24 hours, we started our relief programmes. I must say that the local and foreign fraternal organisations such as the St. John's Ambulance Brigade, Redd Barna, FORUT and Save the Children Fund (U.K.), immediately joined hands with us while NOVIB, OXFAM (U.K.) and (America), F.N.S., Helvetas and several other organisations responded to our call for help. It was in 1983 July that we, for the first time, announced our '3-R' Programme, Relief, Rehabilitation and Reconciliation, through the media and went into immediate action.

Today, after nearly 4 1/2 years, 'we' have become the largest, indigenous implementing body in the non-governmental field in respect of Relief, Rehabilitation, Reconstruction and Reconciliation, leading to Development, when we consider the geographical distribution, diversity of services and continuity of our programmes. This is again a response to a challenge we faced.

Later, in our meeting, my colleagues will address you on Sarvodaya's activities in the field of Relief and

Rehabilitation. Therefore, I will not go into details. I would only deal with some general points.

We should be judged by our work. By no means would I say that we have a highly skilled and experienced staff in disaster relief and rehabilitation work. But we do not lack a courageous and brave, committed and non-sectarian cadre of young workers who took relief to the victims of war in most difficult places.

We may be lacking the managerial strength in logistics, monitoring and judgement. But the important thing is that we are there where relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction are needed. We would request our Non-Governmental partners to help us to improve ourselves, so that we can develop the needed capacity to do an efficient job.

Perhaps it is also true that in the first enthusiasm following the Peace Accord, we proposed to do more than we could effectively handle. But I can tell you now that we will do the same again if there isn't any change. We are not a relief agency and I hope we will never have to become one. But our history and our philosophy, the nature of this country and of the conflict, all make it imperative that we remain involved in the relief effort for two reasons. The first is simple. We are Sri Lankans, and our people are suffering. We care about it as much as any outsider. Secondly, it is imperative because we see relief and rehabilitation a little differently. Relief, yes. Rehabilitation, certainly. Reconstruction, definitely. But not only the reconstruction of houses and clinics, but also reconstruction of institutions, of human beings and attitudes. The fourth R is Reconciliation. Some of these things can be done by outsiders but some can be done only by Sri Lankans.

So, to the bilateral agencies here today, who have or will fund relief agencies from their own countries. I have a request. Of course, you want your funding to reach the most needy, as quickly and as effectively as possible. But there are useful compromises to be made between speed and long-term impact. There are important concessions to be made between the high cost of experienced foreign expertise

and the perception you may have of lower efficiency – but the greater volume is possible through local delivery mechanisms. It is no longer good enough that outsiders work 'with' local organisations. Too often this only means small grants to local or localised groups, while the outsiders get on with the 'real' work. Worse, it means that local people are simply employed by the foreign agency for a year or two or three, that they work in the country. They are rarely in positions of influence, and rarely take anything away from the experience that they could build upon. With minor exceptions, this was true after the Biafran war. It was true in Bangladesh in 1972, in Thailand with Kampuchean refugees and it is probably true in Ethiopia today.

When the Peace Accord was signed, there was a brief flurry of foreign relief agencies rushing about in Sri Lanka writing up large proposals. Many of them came to visit us, seeking our impressions of the situation or perhaps wanting to assess our capacity. Many of them have since disappeared – waiting I suppose – until the situation cools down again and the exercise could be repeated. Would it not make more sense for them to be here now, training Sri Lankan organisations so that we can take on a larger responsibility when the time comes? So that our capacity will not be found wanting when the real challenges arises?

We – and I mean all Sri Lankan organisations genuinely interested in the development of our country – will be here long after the relief agencies go. So, my request to the bilateral agencies is that you think about these questions long and hard, and help us with the tools now so that we can continue to do the job after the agencies leave.

To our NGO friends I have the same request, but I need more from you. If you find us lacking in managerial strength, in logistics, in monitoring or judgement, do something about it. Help us. Force us to examine the criticism. May be there are good explanations, but where there aren't, may be you can help us. This is either the end or, hopefully, the beginning of our country, and we are going to be here, as I have said, long after you leave. Teach

us what you have learned in other disaster situations. Help us so we can become stronger, more effective. Let us work with you rather than for you so that our strength for the real battle ahead, the just and equitable development of our country, will be invigorated and renewed.

You may wonder why I spoke so much on Relief and Rehabilitation at this meeting where the principal objective is to present a three-year consolidated budget which does not include Relief and Rehabilitation Project estimates. This budget for which we are seeking your commitments is only made up of the minimum amounts we require to carry out Life Line Activities in 5600 villages, social welfare services under the Suwa Setha Programmes, other related supporting services and the Sarvodaya Economic Enterprises Development Services. Every item in this consolidated budget is closely tied to all other items in the budget. If you take one item out then it affects the programme as a whole.

Under special projects so far we have implemented our RRR programme, principally with grants from NOVIB, USAID, FORUT, SCF (U.K.), Redd Barna, Rissho Kosei-Kai and OXFAM, while smaller contributions were made by some others. Now we have planned to shift and upgrade the RRR Services from the Special Projects Division to a separate RRR Division, under a separate Director from 1st April, 1988. I would also like to propose a special Sarvodaya RRR Donor Consortium Meeting when the time is ripe for it and the thoughts I expressed, therefore, on this subject should be considered as the lines on which Sarvodaya is thinking at the moment. Of course, these thoughts are based on actual experiences and we have to further develop them.

Now let me revert back to our integrated approach which is now in its 30th year.

The Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement is based on the principles of Truth. Non-violence and Self-denial. It is the exact opposite of party and power politics and organised religion, in that it has no barriers of any sort whatsoever. It

aims at the attainment of utmost happiness through doing good without expectation of reward. Any one, whatever his income, his religion, his caste or race, can give of his best in those talents with which he is most qualified to serve. There is no rigid leadership in the Movement. Every one serves as an equal in the enterprise. The very nature of the difficulties that face our country gives ample scope for useful and productive activity.

Our effort is to harness the inherent talents and resources available and lying unavailed of in our country, for the good of the community.

A solution to these problems, we believe, is possible only through a proper consideration of the following principles:

1. Truth, Non-violence and Self-denial to be the cornerstone of all human endeavour.
2. The means adopted in effecting this change to be as pure as the end itself. We do not agree that the end justifies the means.
3. Proper harmonisation of the two disciplines of science and spirituality i.e. a balance between the precepts of religion and the contribution of science is aimed at.
4. The direction of society so as to bring about the full bloom of the potentialities of the individual through co-operative activity.
5. Acceptance of a common national philosophy not inconsistent with universal welfare. A good citizen of a country is a good citizen of the world.

One need not go very far to understand that it is not at all possible for an agency like the State alone to create a suitable mental and psychological atmosphere to bring about this fundamental change. With all its bureaucratic limitations and political expediencies the State is hardly in a position to assume full responsibility for a task of this magnitude. It has to be evolved from the hearts and minds of the people who are prepared to dedicate their lives for this cause, which calls for immense personal sacrifice. The Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka makes a sincere and

bold attempt to create the necessary atmosphere to bring together such individuals with an unwavering faith in the Welfare of All – Sarvodaya.

I beseech you to consider the value of the millions of hours of physical and mental labour put in to build up these ideas into concrete ongoing programmes covering the whole nation in space and harmonising the ancient and modern values in time.

I know it is very difficult to do a quantification of the impact of the Sarvodaya Movement on our people as it is not easily visible. At the same time please consider whether there are any other alternatives which have been worked out to solve the national problem. Today leading people in the land in various disciplines are associated with Sarvodaya while people from all other strata in society are also co-operating with us in an organised manner. We have earned a credibility and we may be the leading moral force in the country. We are determined to make the maximum commitment and correct whatever shortcomings we have.

I thank you for your past contributions and look forward for your future co-operation. We will place before you a budget the aggregate of which is less than 1.5 US$ per year per participant-beneficiary or a budget which is less than 500 US$ per year per village.

The Resource Partners' Consortium concept itself is of immense value to all of us – governments, NGOs and human beings. It is true development with a human face. We are helping to bring together humanity, to share their spiritual, material and financial resources to build up a universally sustainable culture – a culture where both affluence and poverty become redundant.

In conclusion, I wish that these few days we are together will also be a learning experience for all of us in development, peace and justice in these dark days of uncertainty in our country. Your presence with us provides a ray of hope and courage for us to re-dedicate ourselves to

rebuild our spiritual, moral and cultural values so that our social, political and economic institutions can function in an atmosphere of mutual tolerance, peace and justice.

I thank you all and once again I welcome you all.

16.

Sarvodaya Concept of Development and its Applicability to Building up an Asian Regional Network Including Japan

I come from Sri Lanka, that resplendant island at the tip of the Indian Subcontinent. Forty years of treading a western-oriented development and modernisation process that catered in full measure for a privileged elite class, but not to others has brought my country to literal social disruption, conflict and blood-shed today.

It was hard to leave my motherland at a time like this. Still, I have come here because the invitation extended to me by Mr Kanamai Kamada, the Governor of Kagoshima Prefecture was impossible for me to disregard. At the same time I have a great attachment to this country, Japan, for many reasons. So I would like to convey my sincere gratitude and thanks for this invitation to Mr Kamada first. I also extend my unreserved thanks and gratitude to the sponsors of this symposium, namely, Nampoken International Centre of Kagoshima and the Asian Club Foundation, along with others, who made this symposium possible. To all of them I bring greetings from the Members of the Sarvodaya Movement of Sri Lanka who are spread out in thousands of our villages.

I understand that a two year research programme was conducted by the Asian Club on the subject of "internationalisation of local areas" and this symposium is a follow-up of that research project.

I have selected the subject of *Sarvodaya Concept of Development And its Applicability to Building up an Asian Regional Network which includes Japan.*

I selected this subject as I believe that my contribution will help you to understand your own findings in comparison to our experience and thinking after three decades of work in Sarvodaya. From our experience we strongly believe that we can blaze a new trail in development in the context of modern challenges and possibilites in our region if only we are humble enough to learn from one another and share our knowledge and resources. In my presentation I am going to talk about – What is Sarvodaya? How does Sarvodaya look at development? How does Sarvodaya's approach differ from other forms of development concepts and practices that are prevalent in the world today? How relevant is the

Sarvodaya approach to the Asian situation in particular? What is the critical and decisive role Japan can play in the context of the Sarvodaya philosophy and programmes in relation to the Asian Region?

The Western Model

After the Second World War the most prevalent development model accepted by most countries was the Western model. The United States, Soviet Union, Japan, West Germany, South Korea, Taiwan and Singapore are often cited as successes of this model. Naturally, the rest of the world was made to believe that if they followed the same path they could also attain similar materialistic affluence that these countries have achieved. Most of the newly independent countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America who followed this model, for reasons not difficult to find, fell far short of these expectations. Furthermore their conditions became far worse than what they were when under colonial rule. That means that there is something radically wrong in the Western model when applied to what is generally called the old world situations.

Production-centered Development

The Western model could be easily defined as production-centered development. Production of more and more goods and services and the creation of more and more desires to consume these, seem to be the underlying philosophy of this model. In production-centered development the total perspective of human personality, nature, and sustainable relationships between man and nature, seem to have been lost sight of. Human happiness has been sought only through sense gratifications coming from increased consumption of goods and services. The higher ideals of human personality and social values which were the foundations of human civilizations were totally disregarded and even purposefully made to erode.

Non-renewable natural resources have been exploited and manipulated at a faster rate than nature could replenish them. Markets have been flooded by standardised goods and services creating mass consumption societies. The adverse impact such processes would have on human

cultures has been totally disregarded. In the name of an open economy my country has become a free market for foreign manufactured products which can be bought and consumed from borrowed monies from international lending institutions. Of course the giant share of such consumption luxuries goes to the class of select elites while the short-term suffering and long-term debt repayments fall on the present and future generations of masses of poor people. But from a growth rate point of view the elites themselves have adopted, the country has developed.

Great discoveries made in science have been applied to develop technologies purely with the objective of more and more efficient mass production, mass distribution and mass consumption, without taking into consideration the adverse influence such indiscriminate applications would have on human personalities, human family life and well-being of communities.

A Destructive Process

The kind of centrally controlled bureaucracies and managerial capitalism presently imposed on human societies purely for the sake of keeping this production-centred development going is unsurpassed in human history. When one considers in depth the globally connected trading, commerce and finance systems that have been developed to make these systems work, I begin to wonder whether such global slavery on human spirit and freedom ever existed before. The system has forced individuals to do things and behave in ways that they perceive as neither satisfying to themselves nor for the general good of the society. Governments seem to have lost control of regulating these processes even within their own political boundaries. These affect life styles of humanbeings, their family relationships, social organisations and human consciousness in the same destructive manner as nuclear pollution transcends man-made and natural barriers.

What are the most obvious physcial consequences of this dominant production-centered process of development? Depletion of natural resources, ecological imbalances,

environmental hazards and pollution, damage to the ozone layer, creation of acid rains and desertification are some of the well-known global hazards.

To me the worst is de-personalisation of humanbeings leading to mental disorders and family disruptions. This has led to a sense of alienation and purposelessness ending up in violent crimes.

On the other hand self-interested professional bureaucracies have mismanaged the societies in such a foolish manner that social disruptions cannot be even contained by the use of police and armed forces.

A very good example is my own country. Here, a traditional, peaceful human society has been disrupted in such a manner due to bad planning and management of human and natural resources for over four decades that the combined military strength of Sri Lanka and its regional super-power neighbour India, has failed to contain the violent disruptive forces released by the angry and alienated youth who have risen against this violent system. As Lord Buddha admonished 2,500 years ago, violence begets violence. In our land of the Buddha we are caught up in that vicious cycle.

The Reality

It is one thing to reject the production-centered development, ideological and practical reasons can easily be found to prove that production-centered development paradigm is detrimental to human well-being. But in reality it is this model that is mostly found in our individual, family and community life backed by powerful governments, corporations, global financial institutions, giant communications systems and the armament industry. It is this model that has absorbed most scientists, technologists and global capital and so on. This is a reality we have to face.

Sometimes these giant organisations themselves in their research detect their failure and even recognise the worth of people-centered development processes and particularly those of non-governmental development organisations, who

have successfully done alternative development exercises at a micro-level.

In all continents of the world there are organisations and movements who have successfully generated people-centered devleopment processes. In the Asian Region there are quite a few successful attempts. What I am most familiar with is my own organisation, the Sarvodaya Movement, though I do not claim it as the most successful model. I will be more comfortable to talk of the Sarvodaya approach as a workable alternative development model.

Sarvodaya

The word "Sarva" in Sanskrit means all embracing, integrating everything pertaining to man, society and nature. "Udaya" means awakening or well-being. The literal meaning of Sarvodaya is the awakening of one and all in society in every respect. It was Mahathma Gandhi who coined this word Sarvodaya to signify the kind of society he would advocate for post-independent India. The Sri Lankan Sarvodaya Movement was inspired by Gandhian thoughts and the teachings of Lord Buddha.

The awakening of all signifies respect for human life, animal life and plant life, and generally speaking, a friendly and equitable attitude to the entire living world. Such a philosophy leads one to believe in non-violent social change.

Researchers say that one living species becomes extinct every three hours. By the year 2,000 it will be one in every twenty minutes. Already one fourth of the entire land surface on our planet is in the process of desertification. With the damage caused to the ozone layer temperatures will rise and oceans will extend and more land surface will be desertified and salinated.

Man's violence to man and nature must be stopped by finding and promoting a non-violent revolutionary path.

Non-Violence

Non-violence has a number of facets. Firstly, there is non-violent resolution of personal conflicts. Secondly, non-violence should be extended to the rest of the living

kingdom, namely, the animals and plants, so that each humanbeing understands and respects the need for harmonious inter-relationship between different species for mutual survival on this planet. Thirdly, the social, political and economic structures should be structurally non-violent so that human inequality, alienation, exploitation and injustices are reduced to a minimum. This kind of structural non-violence is dependant upon the social policies, adopted by governments and dominant economic organisations, as well as the strength of living cultures which can control them.

DEVELOPMENT AS AN AWAKENING PROCESS

Sarvodaya concept of development is a people-centered development process. It believes in total awakening of human personality, total awakening of the family-the primary social group and community awakening. Based upon these three levels of awakening Sarvodaya looks at urban community awakening, national awakening and global awakening processes. If we call the first three micro-awakening, the latter can be called macro-awakening.

Personality Awakening

Development should begin with the human personality itself. Without awakening my own personality it is futile to talk of helping others to awaken their personalities.

Whatever I may contribute to the well-being of others is the direct result of my attempting to awaken myself. Firstly, I must understand about my own personality structure. My personality is a psycho-physical entity which I label as 'I, me, mine' and so on. Physically, when my body is sub-divided into sub-atomic particles I end up with the four elements, namely, air, water, earth and fire, which are the same elements I will find in any other physical body. The food I intake to sustain my body is also composed of these elements. When I look at my body and other physical objects around me, which I consume and use, I begin to see there is nothing substantial in any of those except a constantly changing nature such as found with air, heat, liquidity and solidity. All these are energy forms inter-mixed with space.

Similarly, when I look at my mind I begin to observe numerous contacts I get from outside through my eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and mind. These six sensory doors bring me sensations, feelings. I create perceptions and dispositions out of them and all of which continuously transform my consciousness.

Just like the body, my mind also is subject to constant change and there is no substantiality in it but a certain ever-changing nature. When I look at my psycho-physical entity and those of others in this manner I recognize the importance of co-existence with my fellow living beings and the natural surroundings because all of them also are subject to the same kind of ever-changing processes. In Christianity this unity was portrayed by Christ as the "Fatherhood of God" making us related to one another as his children. In Islam the brotherhood of man is stressed.

OVERCOMING IGNORANCE

I also begin to realise that it is my ignorance of this reality that makes me compete with others, exploit others, alienate myself from others, create conflicts and wars with others.

If I succeed in overcoming this ignorance about myself then I will learn to love and live with others on grounds of friendship, compassion, equality and co-operation.

The most important outcome of this awakening or enlightenment process that is taking place withing myself in such a manner is the kind of dispassionate joy of living I experience. This joy is more sublime and different from both self-indulgence in material comforts as well as self-mortification which is giving pain to the body. In other words, the Golden Mean or the Middle Path or the Noble Eight-fold Path that Lord Buddha preached is what I am striving for, I begin to realise.

This self-realisation process – therefore, makes us at Sarvodaya reject affluence as well as poverty as our goal in life. We will strive for "a no affluence as well as no poverty society" as our goal in life. We also reject possessive individualism as a goal in life.

A SHARED SOCIAL GOAL

When I look around and see what nature has provided, what science has discovered, what technology has made possible, then I realise that such a no-poverty no-affluence society is realisable not only for myself but for all other humanbeings in the world. Acceptance of such a global ideal is very realistic from the point of view of realising it in practice because the resources in the world for such a life are quite adequate to satisfy the basic needs of all humanbeings. Similarly, human greed will give way to human beneficience, wisdom and compassion, thus paving way to protect other species and nature also.

Thus, I, along with others, can re-build the most essential harmony between man and nature that is being endangered by the production-centered development model. Greed is at the root of all evil. Ignorance, greed and illwill should be dispelled from our minds.

Therefore, concerned humanbeings should begin with themselves. Call it any name. Call it a rational view to the realities of the present day world. Call it spiritual development. If you still want to call it by another name, you may call it even RELIGION. Whatever name by which you call it, the most important thing is, we as humanbeings have recognised that no rational, spiritual, religious or sustainable development is possible, without the human personality itself being awakened to play the central role to re-build a new society, a new world.

Family and Community Awakening

Thus instead of handing over the responsibility of re-structuring our societies and the world to governments, inter-governmental organisations or even global institutions like the United Nations Organisation, I as an individual, take upon myself the responsibility of awakening myself and thus adjusting my behaviour and conduct towards my fellowbeings and natural environment.

The humanbeings whom I can influence most are my own family members. The four cardinal principles of good social conduct, taught by Lord Buddha, I can follow within my family group. They are – the principles of sharing, pleasant language, constructive activity and equality in association.

Whether I live in an urban area or in a rural area, I have to live with my family and other families in the neighbourhood. There is a possibility of extending these principles of social conduct to those families as well. In other words personality awakening can lead to a programme of family and community awakening. In the Sarvodaya Movement a cluster of families or what is generally known as a neighbourhood, village or a barrio is considered to be the micro unit, or the basic organisation on which national and international processes of change have to start.

This basic group or the community of people live in a particular, cultural, social and physical environment. This environment should provide the first resources to sustain their psychological as well as physical life. In other words basic need satisfaction has to begin with one's own social and physical environment. It should be a kind of organic evolution providing most of all psychological and physical security for all members of the community. This is exactly what most communities in the world lack today.

Psycho-Physical Security

At this moment both in the affluent world and in the poor world people lack the most essential human need, namely, psycho-physical security. The main cause for this is the global production-centered development machinery with all its complicated appendages functionally reaching almost all humanbeings on this planet. Local initiative and opportunities to participate in their basic need satisfaction efforts are denied to the people. Valueless centrally controlled monstrous structures have taken away the emotional and life-sustaining links that existed between humanbeings and the territories in which they lived.

What Sarvodaya is trying to do is to re-build a community which will not give priority to economically sound development projects and programmes without taking into consideration their social and ecological cost. Sarvodaya attempts to promote community planning and participatory learning programmes which will once again promote shared values and community life. Sarvodaya works towards a people-centered development process where participation in

decision making of all those who are affected by such decision making is ensured. What is aimed at is a simpler, more effective and more democratic decision making process where energy, money and power will not be concentrated in centralised structures.

Self-development of Communities

In 5,600 villages out of a total of 23,000 villages in Sri Lanka the Sarvodaya Movement is doing its utmost to build a people centered integrated development process which works. If it succeeds we believe that we have made a great contribution to our ailing human civilization. In a macro-society blinded by temptations of material affluence acquired by a few at the cost of the many, it is extremely difficult to implement Sarvodaya programmes. It is easier to educate simple unsophisticated people and get them into a community learning, planning and implementation process than to de-educate the elite who think they control our societies. Until such time insurgencies with sophisticated weapons disturb their comfortable lives they do not seem to realise that development has nothing to do with wealth, machines, technologies, credit and management systems, aid packages etc. All these may be important but they are secondary. The first and foremost for development is the understanding the people should have about their own capacities to improve their quality of life and that of others within the cultures and territories they inhabit.

Governments cannot develop countries. It is only the people themselves who can develop a country. A Government can only facilitate her people's own development process.

Unfortunately, most governments have not learnt this lesson. They have taken upon themselves the development of countries as their prerogative and to assist them they would align themselves with national as well as with multi-national private corporations and governments, but not with people. It grieves my mind and makes my heart bleed when I see in my country thousands of acres of land being leased to foreign companies to develop having

displaced the tillers of the soil from their traditional homelands on one pretext or the other. The inevitable consequence of such expropriation and negligence is the kind of terrible social upheaval that is taking place in Sri Lankan society today.

The saddest aspect of this is that most modern scholars themselves fail to understand the importance of building a spirituo-cultural infrastructure as a pre-requisite to people-centered development. When social upheavals occur, when alcoholism, drug addiction and increased crimes prevail and when violent social conflicts bring about anarchic situations, then they try to explain their causes as ethnic, linguistic, political or economic. They do not perceive it from the point of view of this basic psycho-physical insecurity and alienation of people. Research institutions themselves become profit-making businesses riding on the bandwagon of multi-national devastation processes of expropriating people of their life-sustaining natural assets and cultural heritages.

Non-governmental Development Organisations to the Fore

Asian region has all the lop-sided development I have mentioned so far. But there is a hopeful aspect also. That is the emergence of people-based non-governmental organisations who have proved their worth during the last few decades. Most governments no longer ignore them as mere 'do gooders'. Even inter-governmental organisations including the World Bank now seem to take non-governmental development organisations somewhat seriously. If their intention is to use these organisations as delivery mechanisms that can reach people without bringing about any radical change in their development thinking and the macro-structure they control, then I do not think that the non-governmental organisations or the governments are going to make any better impact on the quality of life of the poor majority in their countries. If on the other hand, the ideological approach and attitudes developed by the non-governmental organisations and the people's level structures they have evolved are understood and

appreciated, then there will be a credible and useful partnership between them as well as a great opportunity to build up a sustainable and saner society in our countries.

Like most other industrialised countries, Japan too as an aid-giving nation has contributed significantly to promote the production-centered consumerist and wasteful development processes and life-styles. Therefore, in reversing these processes to more sustainable and human-scale ones, Japan should subscribe its share. I believe you will pardon me when I say that comparatively speaking non-governmental development organisational sector in Japan, to my knowledge, is far behind those of North America and Western Europe. You may have to catch up with them in a number of ways.

How are you going to do this? Firstly, I believe the non-governmental development organisations in Japan should influence the government of Japan to channel at least 10% of their foreign aid through them to the non-governmental peoples development organisations in the Asian and African regions. This can only be done by a mass education process of the general public, the political leaders, planners and administrators in your country. They must be made to understand that direct aid to basic groups can bring about quicker and more effective development in poorer countries.

Secondly, Japanese non-governmental organisations should build linkages among themselves as well as with non-governmental networks within nations and the region. They should assist them to do their self-development with more information scientific and resource inputs which they cannot find within their own localities.

Thirdly, the local governments in Japan can set an example to the rest of the world by creating within their territory people-centered, development processes where maximum participation of people is facilitated to face the challenges they confront.

Fourthly, local governments like the Kagoshima Prefecture can directly establish linkages with regions in

developing countries where similar participatory processes are promoted and developed.

Fifthly, I would like to stress on the importance of establishing and promoting non-profit making corporations and informal economies also which will shift the stress from production-oriented development to people-centered development.

These institutions can turn out to be the vehicles which can carry modern technology to micro development processes so that the benefits of modern science and technology are received by the individual, family and community structures without any detriment to their personality awakening, cultural settings and the environment. Their professionals can be of immense value to these basic groups as providers of selective information, instruction, motivation and also resources which cannot be found within the territory in which these communities live and work. These professionals can join community leaders to initiate, accelerate and sustain non-violent cultural revolutions.

At this stage I would like to re-emphasise that what belongs to the individual, the family and the community must be taken back from centralised controls and manipulations. However small these micro-processes will be they will have an impact on macro-institutions to re-orient public policy towards peoples' participation and creating empowerment processes for those teeming millions and to empower them to meet their needs with direct resource management by themselves.

The greatest insurance against accidental nuclear hazards or intentional nuclear wars, conventional intra-national and international wars and other hazards will be to work towards the goal of building a truly human civilisation, the foundation of which is an awakening humanbeing, an awakening family and an awakening community – what I call Sarvodaya.

In conclusion, as a sincere friend of the Japanese people I will be failing in my duty if I do not mention of the

dangers that lie ahead for you as a people if you sacrifice your great spiritual and cultural values at the altar of increasing materialist affluence. Already the science and art of harmonious life styles are vanishing from among the young generations. Something has to be done without losing time and that too as vigorously as you have developed the modern Japan. If you help our old societies to remain old in values and new in the right choice of development technology, may be we too can help you.

Aid, I have always maintained, degrades both the receiver and the giver. On the other hand mutual sharing which is a two way flow can ennoble and qualitatively elevate both. So what Asia needs most, and Japan, an integral part of Asia, can contribute most is to build a strong regional network for qualitative sharing of ideas, values, knowledge, skills, experiences and resources.

Mahatma Gandhi talked about making India a Commonwealth of Village Republics. But today I think we can boldly strive for making our whole world a commonwealth of village republics. With ultra modern communication systems and immense advances in other technological fronts this kind of objective is no longer a wild dream. It is a realisable objective. Yet as humanbeings, are our minds ready for this great adventure with our greed for wealth, power and worldy success?

I throw this challenge to the young among you. Come forward and roam the villages of Asia as visionaries of a new world order learning and sharing with the poorest of the poor. They are the richest in heart.

Thank you.

Excerpts from the Keynote address delivered by Dr. A. T. Ariyaratne President of the Sarvodaya Movement of Sri Lanka to the International Symposium on Regional Development held at Kagoshima Prefecture Japan on 27th December, 1988.

17.

What to do, Now?

I am addressing this letter to you after witnessing the destruction caused to the lives and properties of Sinhala people in the North and East during the last few days. We have already established refugee camps in Trincomalee, Kantale, Polonnaruwa, Matale, Anuradhapura, Vavuniya, Dambulla, Padaviya and other places and our workers are doing their very best to help the refugees. Wheresoever refugee work is necessary we shall open up more camps.

When we think of the sad happenings we hear daily, we have to understand that we are going through one of the most dangerous and critical periods in the history of our country. The picture becomes worse when we think of both internal and external forces that have engulfed our people. The common people, with no security and with no protection, are not only losing their lives and their properties but even the freedom and sovereignty that our ancestors protected at the cost of their lives. All these are at stake now!

According to news-reports there are about twenty thousand Indian troops - the "Indian Peace Keeping Force" - in the Northern and Eastern provinces. Tamil militant youths are also armed. May be there are many more groups like that. Our security forces have been confined to their barracks. According to statements publicly announced by certain leaders in the hill-country, in the plantations, they too have arms and ammunition. There are ministers and other political leaders who are being protected by their party men, also armed. Rich families and private enterprises have ensured their security through private security companies. Some groups of Sinhala youth are also said to be arming themselves either for their own security or to fight various kinds of oppression that they are subjected to or because of the political ideologies they believe in. While all these groups are armed the vast majority of Sinhala, Tamil and Muslim people are in a perilous situation where they are uncertain of their lives and they have absolutely no security. Why are we in such a very pathetic situation?

It is quite possible that certain foreign forces, using their intelligence services and in a very subtle manner, are spending a lot of money, providing arms to bring about confusion in our country. A very reasonable doubt lingers in our minds that some of the power-hungry and money-thirsty anti-national forces are cooperating with these intruding foreign forces. We do know that when people take to violence without any clear objective then oppression becomes worse, or perhaps that we may even go under a foreign power. Whatever ensues will be worse than the existing situation with more violence to come. It will not be for the benefit of the common masses; it will be against their welfare.

As a movement which is non-violent, as a people's movement, with a clear philosophy, we have, therefore, to act with tremendous foresight and wisdom at this time. That is why I request you and your colleagues as well as those elders who are working with you, to act with a lot of foresight at a critical time like this. It is to help in such a dialogue and discussion that I am sending you this letter.

We are an organization which has accepted non-violence. Our first loyalty is to the common masses. We have to prevent them from getting into situations of violence. When they are faced with violence we must go in for relief-action immediately, to bring them solace. Whoever gets injured or whoever is deprived of food and shelter and other basic amenities has to be helped. We have to help without finding out to which caste, race, religion or political party they belong, even as we have been doing in the past. Our Movement is well-respected throughout the country as a relief and rehabilitation organization. The first thing we should do at this time is this: Whenever you hear that some people are in trouble go to those places, organize the community and do whatever is possible, to give them immediate relief.

We also should explain to the forces who are armed, be they governmental forces or extra-governmental forces, or

any other armed groups, what the Sarvodaya stand is in this situation. Generally, those who have taken up arms think that anyone who is not with them must be their enemy or else is spying on them. This is quite natural; it is a weakness of all armed groups. To be active in a situation like that and to work in a non-violent and non-sectarian way you need great spiritual power. That power you have to develop and with great tact and patience and without getting confused yourself you should explain to them the stand that we have taken in this particular situation. If we can do that, then, in the same way as we have been working in the past and are working now amidst the violence in the North and East, we should be able to work in other places too.

We should not get into any conflict or enter into any controversy which is outside our developmental, relief, rehabilitation and reconciliation work. We should not get involved in any of these conflicts. There are enough conflicts in the country already and therefore we should not be a party to those conflicts. On the contrary, we should be a democratic force trying to unite all the peoples in our country, in a non-violent way to fight for justice and for peaceful solutions to our problems.

The problem is much more serious when we think of the freedom of the people and the sovereignty of the nation. Various national and international forces can threaten this freedom and sovereignty. There is a long-term solution to this: that is striving non-violently towards justice, equality and peace based on the developmental strategies we are implementing at the level of the village. What we are doing is to bring about a long-term solution even as we are involved in short-term relief, rehabilitation and reconciliation. Though they are short-term and the activities may appear trivial, the cumulative effect of all this will be quite a national force.

We therefore envisage that even those who believe in violence and coercive power will come to us in the end,

because it is only under a non-violent situation they would be able to deliver the goods. It is the power of a non-violent people that is going to be the critical factor. No group, violent or non-violent, who is thinking of the well-being of the common masses can oppose a movement like ours. If any patriotic and fair-minded person knowingly or unknowingly opposes our programme- we have to explain to him what our movement stands for and remove any wrong notions they may have about us.

We do not consider anyone as our enemy; nor should anybody look at us as his enemy. We know all too well that there are people who use their political power against the common man; people who are prone to bribery and corruption, people who do not allow the common man to enjoy the freedom, justice and security guaranteed under the law. We know those who economically exploit the people. Such people as they will be opposed to us, not openly but in indirect ways. They have worked against us in the past, do so even now and perhaps in the future as well. We cannot help that. But the people who believe in progressive democratic changes in the country and those who work for justice will accept us and work with us. Only when there is a social change will we be able to overcome these obstacles and vested interests. Until then we have to even sacrifice our lives and undergo all kinds of oppression ourselves. We should not lose heart; but strive to continue with our work with great courage against such forces.

How do we face the very powerful forces that are against our freedom and sovereignty? If we get divided into small groups we will be weakened. Therefore, we should not get racially divided. Instead, we have to unite the Sinhala, Tamil and other people as one united force democratically. Only such a national force will be respected by world opinion. World opinion does not respect racial, sectarian communal force. If all of us, as one nation, one people, fight for freedom, for sovereignty and for protection of human rights then world opinion will be with us. And without such world opinion we will not be able to withstand

any foreign forces who are here now or will be here in the future.

A large majority of Tamil people in the North and the East- intelligent people - have realized that they have fallen into a racial trap. Belated though it is, this realization is good and the people in the South should themselves realize this truth before they also fall into a bigger trap. We should not be racist in any way; we are one people.

When oppression takes place and human rights are violated here and there, people get emotionally upset. They forget to see the subtle forces working against the common interest of the people. If you look back and think of the violence there was from time to time in the past, you will see the masses became weaker and weaker after each wave of violence. Therefore people must be educated as to the futility of that kind of violence; their intelligence should be directed to understand the realities of the forces that are at work.

Sarvodaya is bringing about that conscientization of the people. Only those who want to keep people ignorant and oppressed will oppose such a liberating programme implemented by Sarvodaya. Those who want to keep people in slavery do not want people to know the truth. We should not give pride of place to propaganda but give prominence to education.

Sarvodaya is not trying to make people asleep; instead they are making people to awaken themselves! Sarvodaya is helping them to go on the path of self-development based on their own self-reliance. It is a non-violent movement. Sarvodaya does not endorse any kind of violence. That is the truth. We do not approve of institutional violence. In the same way we reject personal violence we reject institutional violence too. But to be non-violent does not mean to be inactive; we have demonstrated an active non-violence. When we are non-violent it does not mean that we approve of injustice. Injustice leads to violence, violence leads to increased injustice and oppression.

Therefore, violence and justice cannot co-exist. It is only non-violence and justice that can work together finally.

We believe in one undivided Sri Lanka; we believe that without any discrimination to any race or religion, we in Sri Lanka can live together in a righteous society. We can build such a society! That is why those who accepted the Sarvodaya ideal and objectives are working with people of all races, castes and religions. Our Sarvodaya spiritual value system does not approve of injustice or violence. Whatever the sacrifices we have to make, however difficult the task is, it is only by treading this path that we can build up a unified Sri Lanka where the rights of the common man, his cultural heritage, his freedom, and above all the country's sovereignty can be protected.

May the Blessings of the Triple Gem be with you!

18.

New Year (1989) Message to the Sarvodaya Family

At the close of this year, I want to give you my most affectionate wishes for the new year.

There are many things I have to tell you. But first, I deeply appreciate the service you provided people in conditions of inhuman terror. You were true to Sarvodaya's principles of non-violent and non-partisan action during the past year. I deeply respect you for this.

As a person who is constantly with you, I understand very well the challenges you had to face during the recent Presidential Election. The environment was one of general intimidation and cruelty. Yet you remained non-violent and spread loving kindness. Your success in upholding Sarvodaya ideals in the interests of all makes my admiration and respect for you grow. I am confident that you will face the future with even greater courage.

A Question of Power

The biggest problem in this country is the problem of power. It may be through politics, or wealth, or gangsterism. But whatever it may be, until wealth and the protection of the law is fairly distributed among the people this problem cannot be solved.

This is why we at the Sarvodaya Movement do not exhaust ourselves trying to get power, wealth or weapons into our hands. This is why we strive to awaken knowledge within people through our community education and other training programmes. Our intention is to unceasingly provide necessary skills and resources to people to enable them to determine for themselves what their lives should be. Only through such a course of action can the power of wealth, politics and law come into the hands of the people.

Ultimately, it will not matter which political party comes to power, and how it comes, because if it wants to restore true sovereignty to the people, it will have to actively follow Sarvodaya principles. On the other hand, should it fail to do so, then we cannot expect any party to bring us either democracy, socialism, human rights or peace.

An Unshakable Faith

We should therefore not have even an iota of doubt regarding the non-violence, justice and correctness of the path we are following. Instead we should have an unshakable faith that all the other groups that are violently struggling for power among themselves will exhaust themselves and arrive at the Sarvodaya path. We can hasten this process by performing our duties in a more energetic, sincere and dedicated manner.

We live in an era in which values such as non-violence, loving kindness, human dignity, non-hatred, and forgiveness are mocked at by those involved in power struggles. But instead of losing courage we should keep in mind that violence is a temporary social condition and act with compassion and loving kindness towards those who are violent. Those who carry weapons to kill others forget that they are opening themselves up to a similar fate. We should all cast aside our weapons with the knowledge that non-violence is the true basis of society.

Recently, a monk who serves Sarvodaya in a dedicated manner in the Southern Province came to meet me. He related the following story to me. One night a group of armed men with their faces covered had come to his temple in a jeep without number plates. They had blindfolded him, beaten him, forced him into the vehicle and then driven him for two hours to a distant place.

While he was in captivity, the monk thought to himself "Owing to some wrong information I am being beaten and questioned by these foolish people. Perhaps some past karma of mine might even lead to my death. Therefore there is no point in my hating these people or even generating self-pity on myself. Rather, I should have loving-kindness for them. Perhaps loving-kindness will bring them to their true senses. At the same time I might be strengthened to bear my suffering with equanimity like a true disciple of the Buddha, and die with loving-kindness in my mind."

This monk spent those terrifying hours in concentrating on the teachings of the Buddha and meditating on loving-kindness. Ultimately, the group that had kidnapped him realised their mistake and became very contrite. The monk described to me how the bandits had pleaded with him for forgiveness and treated his wounds. This monk's attitude in facing danger is an example to us all.

The culprit and the victim

Several reports of similar incidents affecting Sarvodaya workers have reached me. On every one of these occasions, the truth of the Buddha's teaching that "Those who conduct according to the Dhamma will be protected by the Dhamma" has been proved. Sometimes, an innocent person's life may be destroyed by a criminal. This is because such a person does not work with spiritual forces, but rather with negative forces such as ignorance or weapons. Hatred arises in both the criminal and the victim because neither is aware that their present, past and future lives are an unbroken unity.

On the other hand, should the person who is persecuted believe in rebirth, then he will be confident that by forgiving his persecutor, he will derive an immense benefit in his future life. People who are practised in meditation will be better able to face violence and death with better sense than others.

It is important that the person who is being injured should use even the few moments available to him or her to explain fearlessly to his persecutor the futility of hate, violence, revenge and injustice, and how according to karmic law the good and bad we do comes back to us. However, it is possible that a persecutor who intends to kill you will not give you a chance to talk. Even in such a situation should you, through even a smile, show him your spiritual strength, compassion and lovingly kind attitude, you will be providing him with an opportunity to think deeply at a later time when he regains his senses.

Life without beginning or end

The reason why there is so much violence in the world today is because we have forgotten that human life in mind-body combination continues under the karmic law of cause and effect from birth to birth. Recent scholarly research shows that the belief in rebirth prevailed in early Islam and Christianity, and not only in Buddhism and Hinduism.

Likewise, many modern scientists have expressed their belief that this life is not our only one, but that it is linked to past and future lives.

Every action that we intentionally perform follows us like a shadow. Nor does it cease to do so with death. Any criminal act we do, regardless of whether we escape the criminal law or not, gets registered in our consciousness. We cannot escape the karmic law. We will have to bear the consequence. To the extent that we understand our own natures, we can avoid doing what is wrong, and instead do what will yield good consequences.

The word "I" stands for a mind-body complex. Various sensations come to us through our eyes, ears, nose, tongue and body. In turn, various thoughts and passing phenomena arise in reaction, and get imprinted in our consciousness. They in turn, interact with the memories and various ideas that arise in the mind. In this manner the body and mind work constantly together. They travel onwards in ceaseless change under the karmic law. At death, although the physical body perishes, the mind-body continues, all the time subject to dependent origination under the influence of the good and bad deeds of the past. This is known in the Buddha Dhamma as the Five Aggregates which travel through the endless process of becoming.

Consequences are not limited to the person who is at the receiving end of insults, harassment, fear or death. The person who is the source of such pain creates, at the very moment he or she gives it, the conditions for such pain to return to him or her. We should therefore explain to

everyone that the fear, the pain, the torture that we give to others, will surely come back to us.

In today's society anyone who, for whatever reason, murders others does so because of ignorance. Therefore, the only sure way of rescuing our society from violence would be for us to explain to others the way their personalities are shaped. We need to do this with patience and compassion, even if it means sacrificing our lives. We must strive tirelessly to give this knowledge to all, not just to some.

A good end through good means

At Sarvodaya we strongly believe that every human being is entitled to economic, political and social justice. But we even more strongly believe that the path to be followed should be one based on people's power that is both non-violent and in keeping with the noblest human values. Anyone who looks at major social transformations in world history will see that those who sought to change society for the better using improper means, caused much greater destruction than those who used good means.

Structural Violence

Violent social structures give rise to injustice and therefore need to be changed. The caste system is one example. Another is the economic system which benefits a few and oppresses many. Still another is the political system which vests political power in the hands of a few and violates the human rights of many. Therefore, those of us who believe in non-violence and justice and wish to change these existing social, economic and political structures, seek to do so from the grassroots level upward through techniques that will bring about alternative non-violent structures. It is for this reason that we say that the Sarvodaya Movement is a non-violent revolutionary movement.

Three Types of Violence

In a way similar to structural violence, personal violence arises from personal conflicts in society. Then, we can see

that violence can occur in society due to the combined effect of structural and personal factors. At Sarvodaya we seek to overcome these three types of violence. We address structural violence by structural change, personal violence by spiritual awakening and structural-personal violence by combining science and morality.

A Holistic Approach

We do not accept that a person's life is determined solely by his or her karma. Rather, we believe that a person's life is determined by society's social, economic and political structures, plus the natural environment and the individual's mental state. Therefore, our work plan involves us in wisely acting to build just social structures, in creating a system of material production that is in harmony with nature and in generating spiritual strength within people. Thus, Sarvodaya's goal is the awakening of all, in which the problems in society are not seen from just one angle but from all angles keeping in mind that society is an interconnected whole.

In present day Sri Lanka, the problems get worse and worse because of our incapacity to look at them in a holistic manner. We need to make our development education functions more systematic and widespread to overcome this incapacity in ourselves. When society gets educated in this manner the injustice, crudity, gangsterism and rage within our society's leaders will get eliminated. A mental climate of wisdom will help to create a non-violent and just social environment.

Rush and Patience

We live in an era in which the communication media has made vast strides. Today we can travel not only by air, on water, under water, on ground, under-ground but also in outer space. In a matter of a moment, messages can be exchanged not only between one point on the earth and another, but also between the earth and other heavenly bodies. In other words, speed is a determining factor in today's world. Speed has become an important part of life.

If speed had developed together with patience then some equilibrium could have been obtained. But speed has often made people impatient.

When Mahatma Gandhi was told that Orville and Wilbur Wright have travelled from London to Paris in an hour in their air-plane, he had given a small smile and querried "Why this hurry?"

Today we are plagued by an astonishing "hurry" disease, and are completely without patience. We see this hurry both in a private and social sense. We try to make crops which normally yield their harvest in a year, yield them in three months by using artificial fertiliser and poisonous pesticides. We have no patience to wait in line at the bus-stand. We are tempted to earn quick money through the lotteries, by gambling or by selling intoxicants instead of exerting ourselves to earn money in a just manner. The Mahaweli project was accelerated from 30 down to 6 years without any concern for the environmental harm and social changes brought about. We suffer from an "acceleration disease" from the personal level up to the social level.

In our foolishness we sometimes designate this acceleration and hurry as "development". But development should be done with thought and patience.

Those of us who are advocates of rapid development fail to see the disabled and lifeless victims of automobile accidents, poisoned foodstuffs, the environmental pollution, landslides, the increasing crime rate, maddened youth and the corruption of the popular mentality.

Our country is like a Sodom & Gomorrah to those of us who have eyes to see. I ask you to be careful not to wittingly or unwittingly become a part of this impatient, accelerated and rushed group. There is no doubt that we should proceed with speed. But we should be in control of that speed so that it is an asset to us.

A No-Poverty, No-Affluence Society

We should produce more and more wealth. But in

producing wealth we must take care not to get trapped by affluence. We must think of those who are at the lowest levels of society. An unpatriotic system which is limitlessly unjust and produces wealth for an affluent few must not become our model.

We should understand that a wrong and rushed system of wealth production will contribute towards destroying both the affluent as well as the poor in society. We should understand that in our country and amongst its people are all the human, natural and technological resources necessary for us to journey along a path that is neither affluent nor impoverished, but which provides everyone with their basic, secondary and tertiary needs.

Facing Elections

When this essay comes into your hands, the Presidental Election will have ended. But in the next few months the General Election will also be held. You should act with restraint and impartiality at this election, just as you did during the Presidental Election. We cannot take any side because the entire political system in which these contests take place is rejected by us as being unsuitable for the country.

Our task is to unite the entire people in consensus and direct them towards prosperity by building a new democratic political system instead of engaging in power politics. We should develop an alternative political system in which those who are presently engaged in power politics can be freed from that state to join instead a more creative process of national development.

I have proposed a movement for a political consensus as a creative alternative system. Therefore, we who are committed to uniting everyone cannot be partisan at any election. In general, the leaders of political parties have accepted the non-partisan nature of the Sarvodaya Movement. However, some of their small-minded followers have in the past insulted and injured us because of their belief that their inability to get us to join with their own

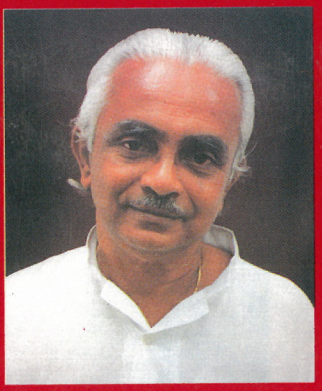
parties meant that we supported the other parties. In the future too, it is likely that short-sighted persons will try to harm us because of our non-partisanship. But I know you have sufficient moral strength to face such a situation. I also know that your strength grows day by day as you perform non-partisan and energetic service that wins the respect of everyone.

The next challenge you must face is the forthcoming General Election. In preparation for it you should do the following:

(1) Through your words and deeds, make it clear to everyone that you neither belong to nor support any group in any way.
(2) Do not permit Sarvodaya society members and community leaders to divide the village on political lines and create disunity.
(3) Ensure that Sarvodaya work in the village is conducted in a non-partisan and just manner.
(4) Do not obstruct people from using their vote in secrecy as they wish.
(5) Educate the community on the Sarvodaya teaching about the movement for a political consensus.

I have a plan to introduce a new revolutionary concept about politics that could rid Sri Lanka of its present system of power politics and the four ills, while providing a framework based on the four virtues in which all citizens can join together to work. It is known as the Movement for a Political Consensus. As soon as the General Election is over I will present this idea to you and to the general public, so that everyone may learn about it.

In conclusion may the Triple Gem bless you, your families, our brothers and sisters of Sarvodaya and their families and the community you serve, and I ask that by the grace of the gods a new year of peace and joy may dawn upon us all.



Dr. A.T. Ariyaratne is the Founder/Leader of the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement in Sri Lanka. Four decades ago, he worked in a rural village and together with the people, developed a philosophy and a Movement which is known as Sarvodaya. In it, the awakening of everyone is symbolised. Today it has spread into many parts of Sri Lanka and to some parts of the world too.

Ariyaratne was inspired by Vinobha Bhave and Mahatma Gandhi. Buddhistic experiences in Sri Lanka were added to this inspiration. Today the Movement works for everyone, regardless of race, creed, caste or colour. It is a unique philosophy based on potential greatness of human beings.

In these seven volumes what Ariyaratne wrote during the last four decades are collected. The beginning of Sarvodaya and its gradual development are reflected here. As Ariyaratne travelled around the world the influences he encountered and how he looked at such influences are seen in these volumes. The essays are refreshingly original and they contain what man should do in order to establish peace within himself and with the world. Ariyaratne's essays are a tribute to his spiritual explorations into himself and into the world.

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